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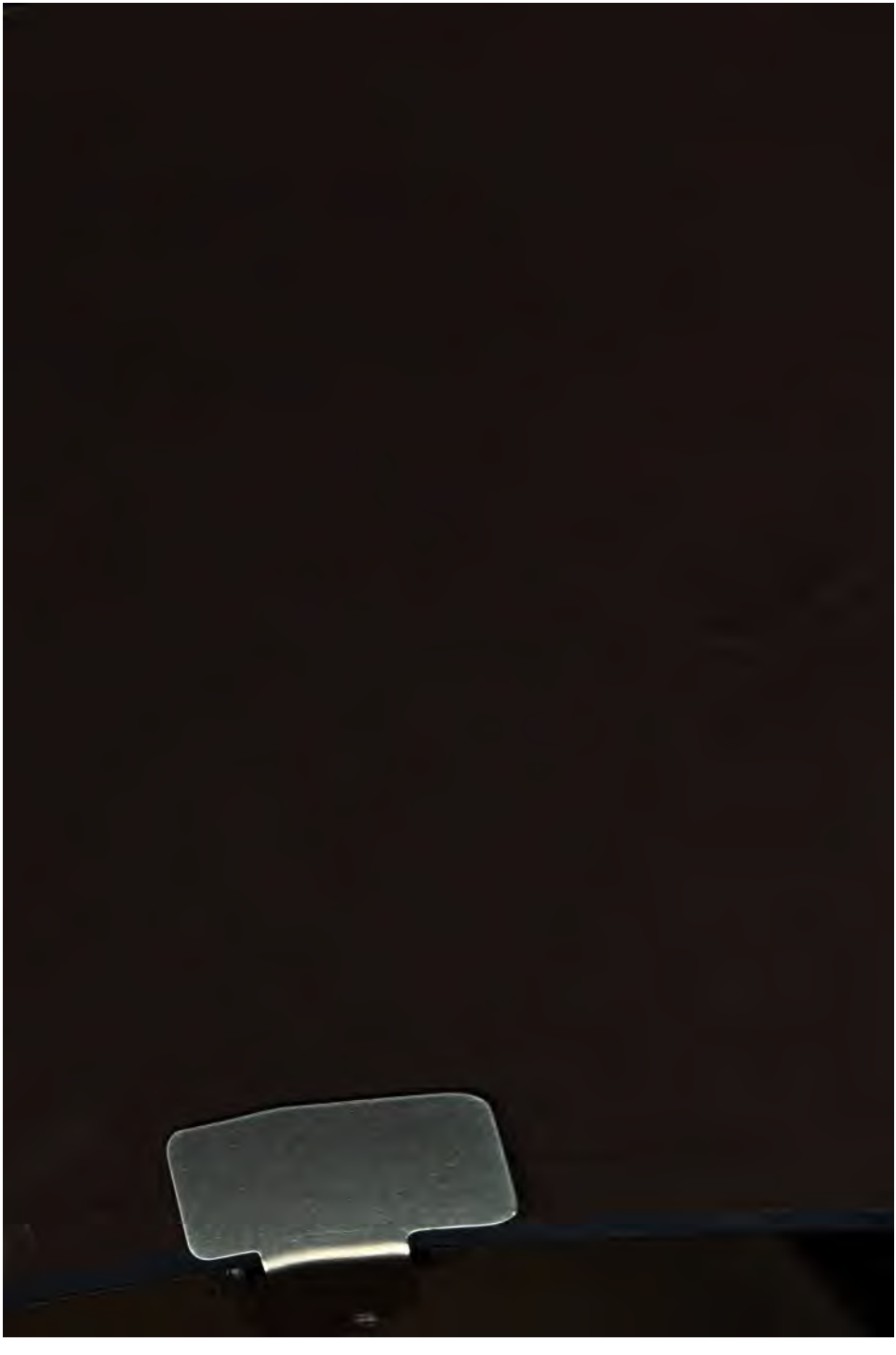

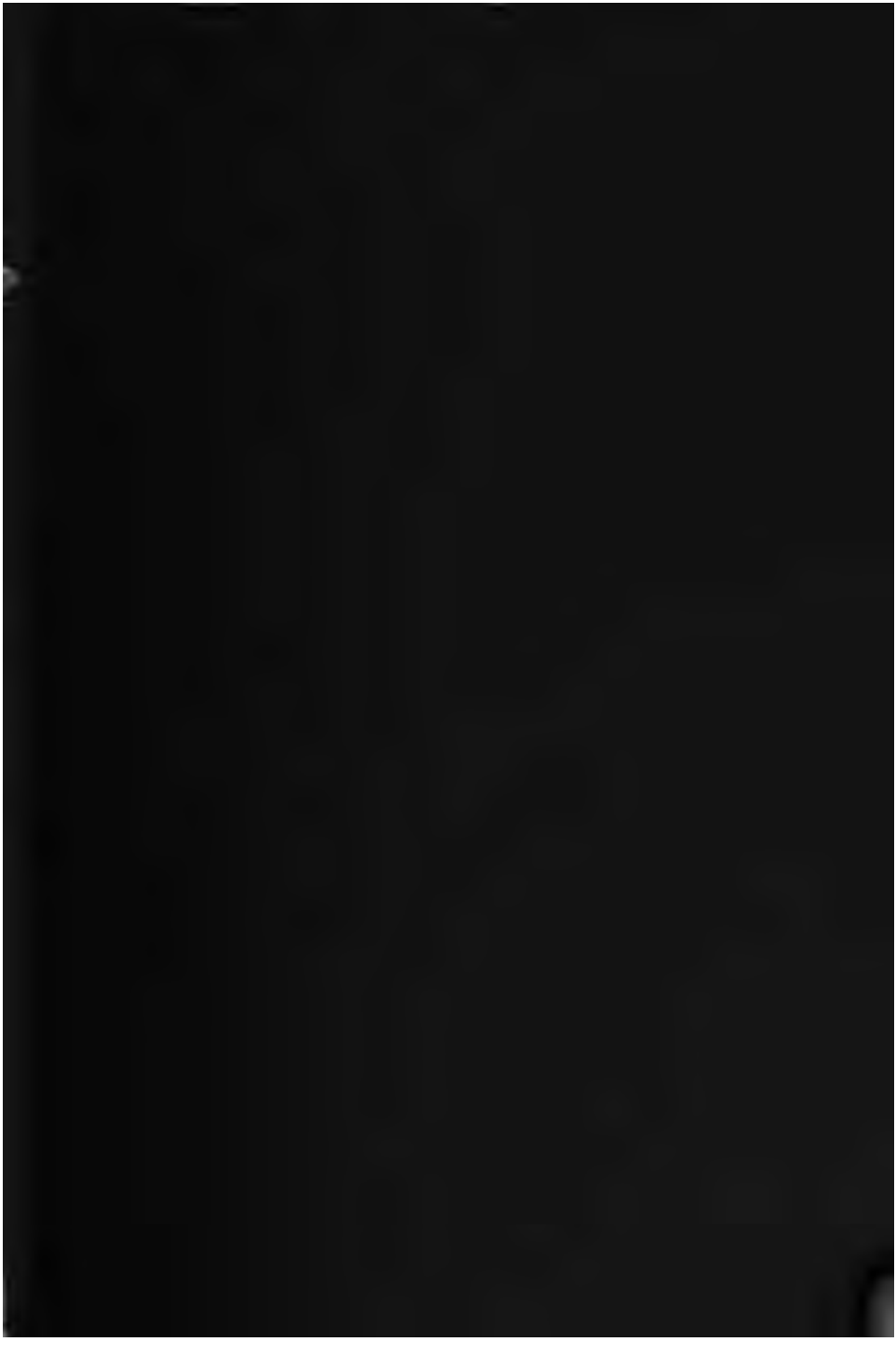

Thanksgiving
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THE WORKS

OF

W. M. THACKERAY

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THE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, 1811-18

IN TWENTY-FOUR VOLUMES

VOLUME III. — 24 (Rack V. 1-2)

THE HISTORY OF PENDENNIS

VOL. I.

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THE HISTORY

OF

PENDENNIS

HIS FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES, HIS FRIENDS AND HIS GREATEST ENEMY

BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

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TO DR. JOHN ELLIOTSON.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Thirteen months ago, when it seemed likely that this story had come to a close, a kind friend brought you to my bedside, whence, in all probability, I never should have risen but for your constant watchfulness and skill. I like to recal your great goodness and kindness (as well as many acts of others, showing quite a surprising friendship and sympathy) at that time, when kindness and friendship were most needed and welcome.

And as you would take no other fee but thanks, let me record them here in behalf of me and mine, and subscribe myself

Yours most sincerely and gratefully,

W. M. THACKERAY.

PREFACE.

IF this kind of composition, of which the two years' product is now laid before the public, fail in art, as it constantly does and must, it at least has the advantage of a certain truth and honesty, which a work more elaborate might lose. In his constant communication with the reader, the writer is forced into frankness of expression;

and to speak out his own mind and feelings as they urge him. Many a slip of the pen and the printer, many a word spoken in haste, he sees and would recal as he looks over his volume. It is a sort of confidential talk between writer and reader, which must often be dull, must often flag. In the course of his volubility, the perpetual speaker must of necessity lay bare his own weaknesses, vanities, peculiarities. And as we judge of a man's character, after long frequenting his society, not by one speech, or by one mood or opinion, or by one day's talk, but by the tenor of his general bearing and conversation; so of a writer, who delivers himself up to you perforce unreservedly, you say, Is he honest? Does he tell the truth in the main? Does he seem actuated by a desire to find out and speak it? Is he a quack, who shams sentiment, or mouths for effect? Does he seek popularity by claptraps or other arts? I can no more ignore good fortune than any other chance which has befallen me. I have found many thousands more readers than I ever looked for. I have no right to say to these, You shall not find fault with my art, or fall asleep over my pages; but I ask you to believe that this person writing strives to tell the truth. If there is not that, there is nothing.

Perhaps the lovers of "excitement" may care to know, that this book began with a very precise plan, which was entirely put aside. Ladies and gentlemen, you were to have been treated, and the writer's and the publishers' pocket benefited, by the recital of the most active horrors. What more exciting than a ruffian (with many admirable virtues) in St. Giles's visited constantly by a young lady

from Belgravia? What more stirring than the contrasts of society? the mixture of slang and fashionable language? the escapes, the battles, the murders? Nay, up to nine o'clock this very morning, my poor friend, Colonel Altamont, was doomed to execution, and the author only relented when his victim was actually at the window.

The "exciting" plan was laid aside (with a very honourable forbearance on the part of the publishers) because, on attempting it, I found that I failed from want of experience of my subject; and never having been intimate with any convict in my life, and the manners of ruffians and gaol-birds being quite unfamiliar to me, the idea of entering into competition with M. Eugène Sue was abandoned. To describe a real rascal, you must make him so horrible that he would be too hideous to show; and unless the painter paints him fairly, I hold he has no right to show him at all.

Even the gentlemen of our age—this is an attempt to describe one of them, no better nor worse than most educated men—even these we cannot show as they are, with the notorious foibles and selfishness of their lives and their education. Since the author of Tom Jones was buried, no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power a MAN. We must drape him, and give him a certain conventional simper. Society will not tolerate the Natural in our Art. Many ladies have remonstrated and subscribers left me, because in the course of the story, I described a young man resisting and affected by temptation. My object was to say, that he had the passions to feel, and the manliness and generosity to over-

come them. You will not hear—it is best to know it—what moves in the real world, what passes in society, in the clubs, colleges, mess-rooms,—what is the life and talk of your sons. A little more frankness than is customary has been attempted in this story; with no bad desire on the writer's part, it is hoped, and with no ill consequence to any reader. If truth is not always pleasant; at any rate truth is best, from whatever chair—from those whence graver writers or thinkers argue, as from that at which the story-teller sits as he concludes his labour, and bids his kind reader farewell.

KENSINGTON: *Nov.* 26, 1850.

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PENDENNIS.

CHAPTER I.

SHOWS HOW FIRST LOVE MAY INTERRUPT BREAKFAST.

ONE fine morning in the full London season, Major Arthur Pendennis came over from his lodgings, according to his custom, to breakfast at a certain Club in Pall Mall, of which he was a chief ornament. At a quarter past ten the Major invariably made his appearance in the best blacked boots in all London, with a checked morning cravat that never was rumpled until dinner time, a buff waistcoat which bore the crown of his sovereign on the buttons, and linen so spotless that Mr. Brummel himself asked the name of his laundress, and would probably have employed her had not misfortunes compelled that great man to fly the country. Pendennis's coat, his white gloves, his whiskers, his very cane, were perfect of their kind as specimens of the costume of a military man *en retraite*. At a distance, or seeing his back merely,

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you would have taken him to be not more than thirty years old : it was only by a nearer inspection that you saw the factitious nature of his rich brown hair, and that there were a few crows-feet round about the somewhat faded eyes of his handsome mottled face. His nose was of the Wellington pattern. His hands and wristbands were beautifully long and white. On the latter he wore handsome gold buttons given to him by his Royal Highness the Duke of York, and on the others more than one elegant ring, the chief and largest of them being emblazoned with the famous arms of Pendennis.

He always took possession of the same table in the same corner of the room, from which nobody ever now thought of ousting him. One or two mad wags and wild fellows had, in former days, endeavoured to deprive him of this place ; but there was a quiet dignity in the Major's manner as he took his seat at the next table, and surveyed the interlopers, which rendered it impossible for any man to sit and breakfast under his eye ; and that table—by the fire, and yet near the window —became his own. His letters were laid out there in expectation of his arrival, and many was the young fellow about town who looked with wonder at the number of those notes, and at the seals and franks which they bore. If there was any question about etiquette, society, who was married to whom, of what age such and such a duke was, Pendennis was the man to whom every one appealed. Marchionesses used to drive up to the Club, and leave notes for him, or fetch him out. He was perfectly affable. The young men liked to walk with him in the Park or down Pall Mall ; for he touched his hat to everybody, and every other man he met was a lord.

The Major sate down at his accustomed table then, and while the waiters went to bring him his toast and his hot newspaper, he surveyed his letters through his gold double eye-glass, and examined one pretty note after another, and laid them by in order. There were large solemn dinner cards, suggestive of three courses and heavy conversation ; there were neat little confidential notes, conveying female entreaties ; there was a note on thick official paper from the Marquis of Steyne, telling him to come to Richmond to a little party at the Star and Garter ; and another from the Bishop of Ealing and Mrs. Trail, requesting the honour of Major Pendennis's company at Ealing House, all of which letters Pendennis read gracefully, and with the more satisfaction, because Glowry, the Scotch surgeon, breakfasting opposite to him, was looking on, and hating him for having so many invitations, which nobody ever sent to Glowry.

These perused, the Major took out his pocket-book to see on what

days he was disengaged, and which of these many hospitable calls he could afford to accept or decline.

He threw over Cutler, the East India Director, in Baker Street, in order to dine with Lord Steyne and the little French party at the Star and Garter—the Bishop he accepted, because, though the dinner was slow, he liked to dine with bishops—and so went through his list and disposed of them according to his fancy or interest. Then he took his breakfast and looked over the paper, the gazette, the births and deaths, and the fashionable intelligence, to see that his name was down among the guests at my Lord So-and-so's fête, and in the intervals of these occupations carried on cheerful conversation with his acquaintances about the room.

Among the letters which formed Major Pendennis's budget for that morning there was only one unread, and which lay solitary and apart from all the fashionable London letters, with a country post-mark and a homely seal. The superscription was in a pretty delicate female hand, marked "immediate" by the fair writer; yet the Major had, for reasons of his own, neglected up to the present moment his humble rural petitioner, who to be sure could hardly hope to get a hearing among so many grand folks who attended his levee. The fact was, this was a letter from a female relative of Pendennis, and while the grandees of her brother's acquaintance were received and got their interview, and drove off, as it were, the patient country letter remained for a long time waiting for an audience in the antechamber, under the slop-basin.

At last it came to be this letter's turn, and the Major broke a seal with "Fairoaks" engraved upon it, and "Clavering St. Mary's" for a post-mark. It was a double letter, and the Major commenced perusing the envelope before he attacked the inner epistle.

"Is it a letter from another *Jook*?" growled Mr. Glowry, inwardly. "Pendennis would not be leaving that to the last, I'm thinking."

"My dear Major Pendennis," the letter ran, "I beg and implore you to come to me *immediately*"—very likely, thought Pendennis, and Steyne's dinner to-day—"I am in the greatest grief and perplexity. My dearest boy, who has been hitherto everything the fondest mother could wish, is grieving me *dreadfully*. He has formed—I can hardly write it—a passion, an infatuation,"—the Major grinned—"for an actress who has been performing here. She is at least twelve years older than Arthur—who will not be eighteen till next February—and the wretched boy insists upon marrying her."

"Hay! What's making Pendennis swear now?'—Mr. Glowry

asked of himself, for rage and wonder were concentrated in the Major's open mouth, as he read this astounding announcement.

"Do, my dear friend," the grief-stricken lady went on, "come to me instantly on the receipt of this; and, as Arthur's guardian, entreat, command, the wretched child to give up this most deplorable resolution." And, after more entreaties to the above effect, the writer concluded by signing herself the Major's "unhappy affectionate sister, Helen Pendennis."

"Fairoaks, Tuesday"—the Major concluded, reading the last words of the letter—"A d—d pretty business at Fairoaks, Tuesday; now let us see what the boy has to say;" and he took the other letter, which was written in a great floundering boy's hand, and sealed with the large signet of the Pendennises, even larger than the Major's own, and with supplementary wax sputtered all round the seal, in token of the writer's tremulousness and agitation.

The epistle ran thus—

"*Fairoaks, Monday, Midnight.*

"MY DEAR UNCLE,

"In informing you of my engagement with Miss Costigan, daughter of J. Chesterfield Costigan, Esq., of Costiganstown, but, perhaps, better known to you under her professional name of Miss Fotheringay, of the Theatres Royal Drury Lane and Crow Street, and of the Norwich and Welsh Circuit, I am aware that I make an announcement which cannot, according to the present prejudices of society at least, be welcome to my family. My dearest mother, on whom, God knows, I would wish to inflict no needless pain, is deeply moved and grieved, I am sorry to say, by the intelligence which I have this night conveyed to her. I beseech you, my dear Sir, to come down and reason with her and console her. Although obliged by poverty to earn an honourable maintenance by the exercise of her splendid talents, Miss Costigan's family is as ancient and noble as our own. When our ancestor, Ralph Pendennis, landed with Richard II. in Ireland, my Emily's forefathers were kings of that country. I have the information from Mr. Costigan, who, like yourself, is a military man.

"It is in vain I have attempted to argue with my dear mother, and prove to her that a young lady of irreproachable character and lineage, endowed with the most splendid gifts of beauty and genius, who devotes herself to the exercise of one of the noblest professions, for the sacred purpose of maintaining her family, is a being whom we should all love and reverence, rather than avoid; —my poor mother has prejudices which it is impossible for my logic to overcome, and refuses to welcome to her arms one who is disposed to be her most affectionate daughter through life.

"Although Miss Costigan is some years older than myself, that circumstance does not operate as a barrier to my affection, and I am sure will not influence its duration. A love like mine, Sir, I feel, is contracted once and

for ever. As I never had dreamed of love until I saw her—I feel now that I shall die without ever knowing another passion. It is the fate of my life; and having loved once, I should despise myself, and be unworthy of my name as a gentleman, if I hesitated to abide by my passion: if I did not give all where I felt all, and endow the woman who loves me fondly with my whole heart and my whole fortune.

"I press for a speedy marriage with my Emily—for why, in truth, should it be delayed? A delay implies a doubt, which I cast from me as unworthy. It is impossible that my sentiments can change towards Emily—that at any age she can be anything but the sole object of my love. Why, then, wait? I entreat you, my dear Uncle, to come down and reconcile my dear mother to our union, and I address you as a man of the world, *qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes*, who will not feel any of the weak scruples and fears which agitate a lady who has scarcely ever left her village.

"Pray, come down to us immediately. I am quite confident that—apart from considerations of fortune—you will admire and approve of my Emily.

"Your affectionate Nephew,

"ARTHUR PENDENNIS, Jr."

When the Major had concluded the perusal of this letter, his countenance assumed an expression of such rage and horror that Glowry, the surgeon, felt in his pocket for his lancet, which he always carried in his card-case, and thought his respected friend was going into a fit. The intelligence was indeed sufficient to agitate Pendennis. The head of the Pendennises going to marry an actress ten years his senior,—the headstrong boy about to plunge into matrimony. "The mother has spoiled the young rascal," groaned the Major inwardly, "with her cursed sentimentality and romantic rubbish. My nephew marry a tragedy queen! Gracious mercy, people will laugh at me so that I shall not dare show my head!" And he thought with an inexpressible pang that he must give up Lord Steyne's dinner at Richmond, and must lose his rest and pass the night in an abominable tight mail-coach, instead of taking pleasure, as he had promised himself, in some of the most agreeable and select society in England.

He quitted his breakfast-table for the adjoining writing-room, and there ruefully wrote off refusals to the Marquis, the Earl, the Bishop, and all his entertainers; and he ordered his servant to take places in the mail-coach for that evening, of course charging the sum which he disbursed for the seats to the account of the widow and the young scapegrace of whom he was guardian.

CHAPTER II.

A PEDIGREE AND OTHER FAMILY MATTERS.

EARLY in the Regency of George the Magnificent, there lived in a small town in the west of England, called Clavering, a gentleman whose name was Pendennis. There were those alive who remembered having seen his name painted on a board, which was surmounted by a gilt pestle and mortar over the door of a very humble little shop in the city of Bath, where Mr. Pendennis exercised the profession of apothecary and surgeon; and where he not only attended gentlemen in their sick-rooms, and ladies at the most interesting periods of their lives, but would condescend to sell a brown-paper plaster to a farmer's wife across the counter,—or to vend tooth-brushes, hair-powder, and London perfumery.

And yet that little apothecary who sold a stray customer a pennyworth of salts, or a more fragrant cake of Windsor soap, was a gentleman of good education, and of as old a family as any in the whole county of Somerset. He had a Cornish pedigree which carried the

Pendennises up to the time of the Druids,—and who knows how much farther back? They had intermarried with the Normans at a very late period of their family existence, and they were related to all the great families of Wales and Brittany. Pendennis had had a piece of University education too, and might have pursued that career with honour, but in his second year at Oxbridge his father died insolvent, and poor Pen was obliged to betake himself to the pestle and apron. He always detested the trade, and it was only necessity, and the offer of his mother's brother, a London apothecary of low family, into which Pendennis's father had demeaned himself by marrying, that forced John Pendennis into so odious a calling.

He quickly after his apprenticeship parted from the coarse-minded practitioner his relative, and set up for himself at Bath with his modest medical ensign. He had for some time a hard struggle with poverty; and it was all he could do to keep the shop in decent repair, and his bed-ridden mother in comfort: but Lady Ribstone happening to be passing to the Rooms with an intoxicated Irish chairman who bumped her ladyship up against Pen's very door-post, and drove his chair-pole through the handsomest pink-bottle in the surgeon's window, alighted screaming from her vehicle, and was accommodated with a chair in Mr. Pendennis's shop, where she was brought round with cinnamon and sal-volatile.

Mr. Pendennis's manners were so uncommonly gentlemanlike and soothing, that her ladyship, the wife of Sir Pepin Ribstone, of Codlingbury, in the county of Somerset, Bart., appointed her preserver, as she called him, apothecary to her person and family, which was very large. Master Ribstone coming home for the Christmas holidays from Eton, over-ate himself and had a fever, in which Mr. Pendennis treated him with the greatest skill and tenderness. In a word, he got the good graces of the Codlingbury family, and from that day began to prosper. The good company of Bath patronised him, and amongst the ladies especially he was beloved and admired. First his humble little shop became a smart one: then he discarded the selling of tooth-brushes and perfumery: then he shut up the shop altogether, and only had a little surgery attended by a genteel young man: then he had a gig with a man to drive him; and, before her exit from this world, his poor old mother had the happiness of seeing from her bed-room window, to which her chair was rolled, her beloved John step into a close carriage of his own, a one-horse carriage it is true, but with the arms of the family of Pendennis handsomely emblazoned on the panels. "What would Arthur say now?" she asked, speaking of a

younger son of hers—"who never so much as once came to see my dearest Johnny through all the time of his poverty and struggles!"

"Captain Pendennis is with his regiment in India, mother," Mr. Pendennis remarked, "and, if you please, I wish you would not call me Johnny before the young man—before Mr. Parkins."

Presently the day came when she ceased to call her son by any title of endearment or affection; and his house was very lonely without that kind though querulous voice. He had his night-bell altered and placed in the room in which the good old lady had grumbled for many a long year, and he slept in the great large bed there. He was upwards of forty years old when these events befel: before the war was over; before George the Magnificent came to the throne; before this history indeed: but what is a gentleman without his pedigree? Pendennis, by this time, had his handsomely framed and glazed, and hanging up in his drawing-room between the pictures of Codlingbury House in Somersetshire, and St. Boniface's College, Oxbridge, where he had passed the brief and happy days of his early manhood. As for the pedigree he had taken it out of a trunk, as Sterne's officer called for his sword, now that he was a gentleman and could show it.

About the time of Mrs. Pendennis's demise, another of her son's patients likewise died at Bath; that virtuous old woman, old Lady Pontypool, daughter of Reginald twelfth Earl of Bareacres, and by consequence great-grand-aunt to the present Earl, and widow of John second Lord Pontypool, and likewise of the Reverend Jonas Wales, of the Armageddon Chapel, Clifton. For the last five years of her life her ladyship had been attended by Miss Helen Thistlewood, a very distant relative of the noble house of Bareacres, before mentioned, and daughter of Lieutenant R. Thistlewood, R. N., killed at the battle of Copenhagen. Under Lady Pontypool's roof Miss Thistlewood found a shelter: the Doctor, who paid his visits to my Lady Pontypool at least twice a day, could not but remark the angelical sweetness and kindness with which the young lady bore her elderly relative's ill-temper; and it was as they were going in the fourth mourning coach to attend her ladyship's venerated remains to Bath Abbey, where they now repose, that he looked at her sweet pale face and resolved upon putting a certain question to her, the very nature of which made his pulse beat ninety, at least.

He was older than she by more than twenty years, and at no time the most ardent of men. Perhaps he had had a love affair in early life which he had to strangle—perhaps all early love affairs ought to be

strangled or drowned, like so many blind kittens : well, at three-and-forty he was a collected quiet little gentleman in black stockings with a bald head, and a few days after the ceremony he called to see her, and, as he felt her pulse, he kept hold of her hand in his, and asked her where she was going to live now that the Pontypool family had come down upon the property, which was being nailed into boxes, and

packed into hampers, and swaddled up with haybands, and buried in straw, and locked under three keys in green-baize plate-chests, and carted away under the eyes of poor Miss Helen,—he asked her where she was going to live finally.

Her eyes filled with tears, and she said she did not know. She had a little money. The old lady had left her a thousand pounds, indeed ; and she would go into a boarding-house or into a school : in fine, she did not know where.

Then Pendennis, looking into her pale face, and keeping hold of her cold little hand, asked her if she would come and live with him? He was old compared to—to so blooming a young lady as Miss Thistlewood (Pendennis was of the grave old complimentary school of gentlemen and apothecaries), but he was of good birth, and, he flattered himself, of good principles and temper. His prospects were good, and daily mending. He was alone in the world, and had need of a kind and constant companion, whom it would be the study of his life to make happy; in a word, he recited to her a little speech, which he had composed that morning in bed, and rehearsed and perfected in his carriage, as he was coming to wait upon the young lady.

Perhaps if he had had an early love-passage, she too had one day hoped for a different lot than to be wedded to a little gentleman who rapped his teeth and smiled artificially, who was laboriously polite to the butler as he slid upstairs into the drawing-room, and profusely civil to the lady's-maid, who waited at the bed-room door; for whom her old patroness used to ring as for a servant, and who came with even more eagerness; perhaps she would have chosen a different man —but she knew, on the other hand, how worthy Pendennis was, how prudent, how honourable; how good he had been to his mother, and constant in his care of her; and the upshot of this interview was, that she, blushing very much, made Pendennis an extremely low curtsey, and asked leave to—to consider his very kind proposal.

They were married in the dull Bath season, which was the height of the season in London. And Pendennis having previously, through a professional friend, M.R.C.S., secured lodgings in Holles Street, Cavendish Square, took his wife thither in a chaise and pair; conducted her to the theatres, the Parks, and the Chapel Royal; showed her the folks going to a Drawing-room, and, in a word, gave her all the pleasures of the town. He likewise left cards upon Lord Pontypool, upon the Right Honourable the Earl of Bareacres, and upon Sir Pepin and Lady Ribstone, his earliest and kindest patrons. Bareacres took no notice of the cards. Pontypool called, admired Mrs. Pendennis, and said Lady Pontypool would come and see her, which her ladyship did, per proxy of John her footman, who brought her card, and an invitation to a concert five weeks off. Pendennis was back in his little one-horse carriage, dispensing draughts and pills at that time: but the Ribstones asked him and Mrs. Pendennis to an entertainment, of which Mr. Pendennis talked to the last day of his life.

The secret ambition of Mr. Pendennis had always been to be a gentleman. It takes much time and careful saving for a provincial doctor, whose gains are not very large, to lay by enough money wherewith to purchase a house and land: but besides our friend's own frugality and prudence, fortune aided him considerably in his endeavour, and brought him to the point which he so panted to attain. He laid out some money very advantageously in the purchase of a house and small estate close upon the village of Clavering before mentioned. A lucky purchase which he had made of shares in a copper-mine added very considerably to his wealth, and he realised with great prudence while this mine was still at its full vogue. Finally, he sold his business, at Bath, to Mr. Parkins, for a handsome sum of ready money, and for an annuity to be paid to him during a certain number of years after he had for ever retired from the handling of the mortar and pestle.

Arthur Pendennis, his son, was eight years old at the time of this event, so that it is no wonder that the lad, who left Bath and the surgery so young, should forget the existence of such a place almost entirely, and that his father's hands had ever been dirtied by the compounding of odious pills, or the preparation of filthy plasters. The old man never spoke about the shop himself, never alluded to it; called in the medical practitioner of Clavering to attend his family; sunk the black breeches and stockings altogether; attended market and sessions, and wore a bottle-green coat and brass buttons with drab gaiters, just as if he had been an English gentleman all his life. He used to stand at his lodge-gate, and see the coaches come in, and bow gravely to the guards and coachmen as they touched their hats and drove by. It was he who founded the Clavering Book Club: and set up the Samaritan Soup and Blanket Society. It was he who brought the mail, which used to run through Cacklefield before, away from that village and through Clavering. At church he was equally active as a vestryman and a worshipper. At market every Thursday, he went from pen to stall; looked at samples of oats, and munched corn; felt beasts, punched geese in the breast, and weighed them with a knowing air; and did business with the farmers at the Clavering Arms, as well as the oldest frequenter of that house of call. It was now his shame, as it formerly was his pride, to be called doctor, and those who wished to please him always gave him the title of Squire.

Heaven knows where they came from, but a whole range of Pendennis portraits presently hung round the Doctor's oak dining-room; Lelys and Vandykes he vowed all the portraits to be, and

when questioned as to the history of the originals, would vaguely say they were "ancestors of his." His little boy believed in them to their fullest extent, and Roger Pendennis of Agincourt, Arthur Pendennis of Creçy, General Pendennis of Blenheim and Oudenarde, were as real and actual beings for this young gentleman as—whom shall we say?—as Robinson Crusoe, or Peter Wilkins, or the Seven Champions of Christendom, whose histories were in his library.

Pendennis's fortune, which was not above eight hundred pounds a year, did not, with the best economy and management, permit of his living with the great folks of the county; but he had a decent comfortable society of the second sort. If they were not the roses, they lived near the roses, as it were, and had a good deal of the odour of genteel life. They had out their plate, and dined each other round in the moonlight nights twice a year, coming a dozen miles to these festivals; and besides the county, the Pendennises had the society of the town of Clavering, as much as, nay, more than they liked: for Mrs. Pybus was always poking about Helen's conservatories, and intercepting the operation of her soup-tickets and coal-clubs: Captain Glanders (H. P., 50th Dragoon Guards), was for ever swaggering about the Squire's stables and gardens, and endeavouring to enlist him in his quarrels with the Vicar, with the Postmaster, with the Reverend F. Wapshot of Clavering Grammar School, for overflogging his son, Anglesea Glanders,—with all the village in fine. And Pendennis and his wife often blessed themselves, that their house of Fairoaks was nearly a mile out of Clavering, or their premises would never have been free from the prying eyes and prattle of one or other of the male and female inhabitants there.

Fairoaks lawn comes down to the little river Brawl, and on the other side were the plantations and woods (as much as were left of them) of Clavering Park, Sir Francis Clavering, Bart. The park was let out in pasture and fed down by sheep and cattle when the Pendennises came first to live at Fairoaks. Shutters were up in the house; a splendid freestone palace, with great stairs, statues, and porticos, whereof you may see a picture in the "Beauties of England and Wales." Sir Richard Clavering, Sir Francis's grandfather, had commenced the ruin of the family by the building of this palace: his successor had achieved the ruin by living in it. The present Sir Francis was abroad somewhere; nor could anybody be found rich enough to rent that enormous mansion, through the deserted rooms, mouldy clanking halls, and dismal galleries of which, Arthur Pendennis many a time walked trembling when he was a boy.

At sunset, from the lawn of Fairoaks, there was a pretty sight; it and the opposite park of Clavering were in the habit of putting on a rich golden tinge, which became them both wonderfully. The upper windows of the great house flamed so as to make your eyes wink; the little river ran off noisily westward, and was lost in a sombre wood, behind which the towers of the old abbey church of Clavering (whereby that town is called Clavering St. Mary's to the present day) rose up in purple splendour. Little Arthur's figure and his mother's cast long blue shadows over the grass: and he would repeat in a low voice (for a scene of great natural beauty always moved the boy, who inherited this sensibility from his mother) certain lines beginning, "These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good; Almighty! thine this universal frame," greatly to Mrs. Pendennis's delight. Such walks and conversation generally ended in a profusion of filial and maternal embraces: for to love and to pray were the main occupations of this dear woman's life; and I have often heard Pendennis say in his wild way, that he felt that he was sure of going to heaven, for his mother never could be happy there without him.

As for John Pendennis, as the father of the family, and that sort of thing, everybody had the greatest respect for him: and his orders were obeyed like those of the Medes and Persians. His hat was as well brushed, perhaps, as that of any man in this empire. His meals were served at the same minute every day, and woe to those who came late, as little Pen, a disorderly little rascal, sometimes did. Prayers were recited, his letters were read, his business dispatched, his stables and garden inspected, his hen-houses and kennel, his barn and pigstye visited, always at regular hours. After dinner he always had a nap with the Globe newspaper on his knee, and his yellow bandanna handkerchief on his face (Major Pendennis sent the yellow handkerchiefs from India, and his brother had helped in the purchase of his majority, so that they were good friends now). And so, as his dinner took place at six o'clock to a minute, and the sunset business alluded to may be supposed to have occurred at about half-past seven, it is probable that he did not much care for the view in front of his lawn windows, or take any share in the poetry and caresses which were taking place there.

They seldom occurred in his presence. However frisky they were before, mother and child were hushed and quiet when Mr. Pendennis walked into the drawing-room, his newspaper under his arm. . . And here, while little Pen, buried in a great chair, read all the books of which he could lay hold, the Squire perused his own articles in the

"Gardener's Gazette," or took a solemn hand at picquet with Mrs. Pendennis, or an occasional friend from the village.

Pendennis usually took care that at least one of his grand dinners should take place when his brother, the Major, who, on the return of his regiment from India and New South Wales, had sold out and gone upon half-pay, came to pay his biennial visit to Fairoaks. "My brother, Major Pendennis," was a constant theme of the retired Doctor's conversation. All the family delighted in my brother the Major. He was the link which bound them to the great world of London, and the fashion. He always brought down the last news of the nobility, and spoke of such with soldier-like respect and decorum. He would say, "My Lord Bareacres has been good enough to invite me to Bareacres for the pheasant shooting," or, "My Lord Steyne is so kind as to wish for my presence at Stillbrook for the Easter holidays;" and you may be sure the whereabouts of my brother the Major was carefully made known by worthy Mr. Pendennis to his friends at the Clavering Reading-room, at Justice-meetings, or at the County-town. Their carriages would come from ten miles round to call upon Major Pendennis in his visits to Fairoaks; the fame of his fashion as a man about town was established throughout the county. There was a talk of his marrying Miss Hunkle, of Lilybank, old Hunkle the Attorney's daughter, with at least fifteen hundred a year to her fortune; but my brother the Major declined. "As a bachelor," he said, "nobody cares how poor I am. I have the happiness to live with people who are so highly placed in the world, that a few hundreds or thousands a year more or less can make no difference in the estimation in which they are pleased to hold me. Miss Hunkle, though a most respectable lady, is not in possession of either the birth or the manners which would entitle her to be received into the sphere in which I have the honour to move. I shall live and die an old bachelor, John: and your worthy friend, Miss Hunkle, I have no doubt, will find some more worthy object of her affection, than a worn-out old soldier on half-pay." Time showed the correctness of the surmise; Miss Hunkle married a young French nobleman, and is now at this moment living at Lilybank, under the title of Baroness de Carambole, having been separated from her wild young scapegrace of a Baron very shortly after their union.

The Major had a sincere liking and regard for his sister-in-law, whom he pronounced, and with perfect truth, to be as fine a lady as any in England. Indeed, Mrs. Pendennis's tranquil beauty, her

natural sweetness and kindness, and that simplicity and dignity which a perfect purity and innocence are sure to bestow upon a handsome woman, rendered her quite worthy of her brother's praises. I think it is not national prejudice which makes me believe that a high-bred English lady is the most complete of all Heaven's subjects in this world. In whom else do you see so much grace, and so much virtue; so much faith, and so much tenderness; with such a perfect refinement and chastity? And by high-bred ladies I don't mean duchesses and countesses. Be they ever so high in station, they can be but ladies, and no more. But almost every man who lives in the world has the happiness, let us hope, of counting a few such persons amongst his circle of acquaintance—women in whose angelical natures there is something awful, as well as beautiful, to contemplate; at whose feet the wildest and fiercest of us must fall down and humble ourselves, in admiration of that adorable purity which never seems to do or to think wrong.

Arthur Pendennis had the good fortune to have such a mother. During his childhood and youth, the boy thought of her as little less than an angel—a supernatural being, all wisdom, love, and beauty. When her husband drove her into the county town, to the assize balls or concerts, he would step into the assembly with his wife on his arm, and look the great folks in the face, as much as to say, "Look at that, my Lord; can any of you show me a woman like *that?*" She enraged some country ladies with three times her money, by a sort of desperate perfection which they found in her. Miss Pybus said she was cold and haughty; Miss Pierce, that she was too proud for her station; Mrs. Wapshot, as a doctor of divinity's lady, would have the *pas* of her, who was only the wife of a medical practitioner. In the meanwhile, this lady moved through the world quite regardless of all the comments that were made in her praise or disfavour. She did not seem to know that she was admired or hated for being so perfect; but carried on calmly through life, saying her prayers, loving her family, helping her neighbours, and doing her duty.

That even a woman should be faultless, however, is an arrangement not permitted by nature, which assigns to us mental defects, as it awards to us headaches, illnesses, or death: without which the scheme of the world could not be carried on,—nay, some of the best qualities of mankind could not be brought into exercise. As pain produces or elicits fortitude and endurance: difficulty, perseverance; poverty, industry and ingenuity; danger, courage and what not; so the very virtues, on the other hand, will generate some vices; and, in fine,

Mrs. Pendennis had that vice which Miss Pybus and Miss Pierce discovered in her, namely, that of pride ; which did not vest itself so much in her own person, as in that of her family. She spoke about Mr. Pendennis (a worthy little gentleman enough, but there are others as good as he) with an awful reverence, as if he had been the Pope of Rome on his throne, and she a cardinal kneeling at his feet, and giving him incense. The Major she held to be a sort of Bayard among Majors : and as for her son Arthur she worshipped that youth with an ardour which the young scapegrace accepted almost as coolly as the statue of the Saint in St. Peter's receives the rapturous osculations which the faithful deliver on his toe.

This unfortunate superstition and idol-worship of this good woman was the cause of a great deal of the misfortune which befel the young gentleman who is the hero of this history, and deserves therefore to be mentioned at the outset of his story.

Arthur Pendennis's schoolfellows at the Grey Friars School state that, as a boy, he was in no ways remarkable either as a dunce or as a scholar. He never read to improve himself out of school-hours, but, on the contrary, devoured all the novels, plays, and poetry, on which he could lay his hands. He never was flogged, but it was a wonder how he escaped the whipping-post. When he had money he spent it royally in tarts for himself and his friends ; he has been known to disburse nine and sixpence out of ten shillings awarded to him in a single day. When he had no funds he went on tick. When he could get no credit he went without, and was almost as happy. He has been known to take a thrashing for a crony without saying a word ; but a blow, ever so slight, from a friend, would make him roar. To fighting he was averse from his earliest youth, as indeed to physic, the Greek Grammar, or any other exertion, and would engage in none of them, except at the last extremity. He seldom if ever told lies, and never bullied little boys. Those masters or seniors who were kind to him, he loved with boyish ardour. And though the Doctor, when he did not know his Horace, or could not construe his Greek play, said that that boy Pendennis was a disgrace to the school, a candidate for ruin in this world, and perdition in the next ; a profligate who would most likely bring his venerable father to ruin and his mother to a dishonoured grave, and the like—yet as the Doctor made use of these compliments to most of the boys in the place (which has not turned out an unusual number of felons and pickpockets), little Pen, at first uneasy and terrified by these charges, became gradually accustomed to hear them ; and he has not, in fact, either murdered his parents, or

committed any act worthy of transportation or hanging up to the present day.

There were many of the upper boys, among the Cistercians with whom Pendennis was educated, who assumed all the privileges of men long before they quitted that seminary. Many of them, for example, smoked cigars—and some had already begun the practice of inebriation. One had fought a duel with an Ensign in a marching regiment in consequence of a row at the theatre—another actually kept a buggy and horse at a livery stable in Covent Garden, and might be seen driving any Sunday in Hyde Park with a groom with squared arms and armorial buttons by his side. Many of the seniors were in love, and showed each other in confidence poems addressed to, or letters and locks of hair received from, young ladies—but Pen, a modest and timid youth, rather envied these than imitated them as yet. He had not got beyond the theory as yet—the practice of life was all to come. And by the way, ye tender mothers and sober fathers of Christian families, a prodigious thing that theory of life is as orally learned at a great public school. Why, if you could hear those boys of fourteen who blush before mothers and sneak off in silence in the presence of their daughters, talking among each other—it would be the woman's turn to blush then. Before he was twelve years old little Pen had heard talk enough to make him quite awfully wise upon certain points—and so, Madam, has your pretty little rosy-cheeked son, who is coming home from school for the ensuing holidays. I don't say that the boy is lost, or that the innocence has left him which he had from "Heaven, which is our home," but that the shades of the prison-house are closing very fast over him, and that we are helping as much as possible to corrupt him.

Well—Pen had just made his public appearance in a coat with a tail, or cauda-virilis, and was looking most anxiously in his little study-glass to see if his whiskers were growing, like those of more fortunate youths his companions; and, instead of the treble voice with which he used to speak and sing (for his singing voice was a very sweet one, and he used when little to be made to perform "Home, sweet Home," "My pretty Page," and a French song or two which his mother had taught him, and other ballads for the delectation of the senior boys), had suddenly plunged into a deep bass diversified by a squeak, which set master and scholars laughing—he was about sixteen years old in a word, when he was suddenly called away from his academic studies.

It was at the close of the forenoon school, and Pen had been

unnoticed all the previous part of the morning till now, when the Doctor put him on to construe in a Greek play. He did not know a word of it, though little Timmins, his form-fellow, was prompting him with all his might. Pen had made a sad blunder or two—when the awful chief broke out upon him.

"Pendennis, sir," he said, "your idleness is incorrigible and your stupidity beyond example. You are a disgrace to your school, and to your family, and I have no doubt will prove so in after-life to your country. If that vice, sir, which is described to us as the root of all evil, be really what moralists have represented (and I have no doubt of the correctness of their opinion), for what a prodigious quantity of future crime and wickedness are you, unhappy boy, laying the seed! Miserable trifler! A boy who construes δ ε *and*, instead of δ ε *but*, at sixteen years of age, is guilty not merely of folly, and ignorance, and dullness inconceivable, but of crime, of deadly crime, of filial ingratitude, which I tremble to contemplate. A boy, sir, who does not learn his Greek play cheats the parent who spends money for his education. A boy who cheats his parent is not very far from robbing or forging upon his neighbour. A man who forges on his neighbour pays the penalty of his crime at the gallows. And it is not such a one that I pity (for he will be deservedly cut off); but his maddened and heart-broken parents, who are driven to a premature grave by his crimes, or, if they live, drag on a wretched and dishonoured old age. Go on, sir, and I warn you that the very next mistake that you make shall subject you to the punishment of the rod. Who's that laughing? What ill-conditioned boy is there that dares to laugh?" shouted the Doctor.

Indeed, while the master was making this oration, there was a general titter behind him in the school-room. The orator had his back to the door of this ancient apartment, which was open, and a gentleman who was quite familiar with the place, for both Major Arthur and Mr. John Pendennis had been at the school, was asking the fifth-form boy who sat by the door for Pendennis. The lad grinning pointed to the culprit against whom the Doctor was pouring out the thunders of his just wrath—Major Pendennis could not help laughing. He remembered having stood under that very pillar where Pen the younger now stood, and having been assaulted by the Doctor's predecessor years and years ago. The intelligence was "passed round" that it was Pendennis's uncle in an instant, and a hundred young faces wondering and giggling, between terror and laughter, turned now to the new comer and then to the awful Doctor.

The Major asked the fifth-form boy to carry his card up to the Doctor, which the lad did with an arch look. Major Pendennis had written on the card, "I must take A. P. home; his father is very ill."

As the Doctor received the card, and stopped his harangue with rather a scared look, the laughter of the boys, half constrained until

then, burst out in a general shout. "Silence!" roared out the Doctor stamping with his foot. Pen looked up and saw who was his deliverer; the Major beckoned to him gravely, and tumbling down his books, Pen went across.

The Doctor took out his watch. It was two minutes to one. "We will take the Juvenal at afternoon school," he said, nodding to the Captain, and all the boys understanding the signal gathered up their books and poured out of the hall.

Young Pen saw by his uncle's face that something had happened at home. "Is there anything the matter with—my mother?" he said. He could hardly speak, though, for emotion, and the tears which were ready to start.

"No," said the Major, "but your father's very ill. Go and pack your trunk directly; I have got a post-chaise at the gate."

Pen went off quickly to his boarding-house to do as his uncle bade

him; and the Doctor, now left alone in the school-room, came out to shake hands with his old schoolfellow. You would not have thought it was the same man. As Cinderella at a particular hour became, from a blazing and magnificent princess, quite an ordinary little maid in a grey petticoat, so, as the clock struck one, all the thundering majesty and awful wrath of the schoolmaster disappeared.

"There is nothing serious, I hope," said the Doctor. "It is a pity to take the boy otherwise. He is a good boy, rather idle and unenergetic, but an honest gentlemanlike little fellow, though I can't get him to construe as I wish. Won't you come in and have some luncheon? My wife will be very happy to see you."

But Major Pendennis declined the luncheon. He said his brother was very ill, had had a fit the day before, and it was a great question if they should see him alive.

"There's no other son, is there?" said the Doctor. The Major answered "No."

"And there's a good eh—a good eh—property I believe?" asked the other in an off-hand way.

"H'm—so so," said the Major. Whereupon this colloquy came to an end. And Arthur Pendennis got into a post-chaise with his uncle, never to come back to school any more.

As the chaise drove through Clavering, the ostler standing whistling under the archway of the Clavering Arms, winked to the postilion ominously, as much as to say all was over. The gardener's wife came and opened the lodge-gates, and let the travellers through with a silent shake of the head. All the blinds were down at Fairoaks —the face of the old footman was as blank when he let them in. Arthur's face was white too, with terror more than with grief. Whatever of warmth and love the deceased man might have had, and he adored his wife and loved and admired his son with all his heart, he had shut them up within himself; nor had the boy been ever able to penetrate that frigid outward barrier. But Arthur had been his father's pride and glory through life, and his name the last which John Pendennis had tried to articulate whilst he lay with his wife's hand clasping his own cold and clammy palm, as the flickering spirit went out into the darkness of death, and life and the world passed away from him.

The little girl, whose face had peered for a moment under the blinds as the chaise came up, opened the door from the stairs into the hall, and taking Arthur's hand silently as he stooped down to kiss her, led him upstairs to his mother. Old John opened the dining-room for

the Major. The room was darkened with the blinds down, and surrounded by all the gloomy pictures of the Pendennises. He drank a glass of wine. The bottle had been opened for the Squire four days before. His hat was brushed, and laid on the hall table: his newspapers, and his letter bag, with John Pendennis, Esquire, Fairoaks, engraved upon the brass plate, were there in waiting. The doctor and the lawyer from Clavering, who had seen the chaise pass through, came up in a gig half an hour after the Major's arrival, and entered by the back door. The former gave a detailed account of the seizure and demise of Mr. Pendennis, enlarged on his virtues and the estimation in which the neighbourhood held him; on what a loss he would be to the magistrates' bench, the County Hospital, &c. Mrs. Pendennis bore up wonderfully, he said, especially since Master Arthur's arrival. The lawyer stayed and dined with Major Pendennis, and they talked business all the evening. The Major was his brother's executor, and joint guardian to the boy with Mrs. Pendennis. Everything was left unreservedly to her, except in case of a second marriage, —an occasion which might offer itself in the case of so young and handsome a woman, Mr. Tatham gallantly said, when different provisions were enacted by the deceased. The Major would of course take entire superintendence of everything upon this most impressive and melancholy occasion. Aware of this authority, old John the footman, when he brought Major Pendennis the candle to go to bed, followed afterwards with the plate-basket; and the next morning brought him the key of the hall clock—the Squire always used to wind it up of a Thursday, John said. Mrs. Pendennis's maid brought him messages from her mistress. She confirmed the doctor's report, of the comfort which Master Arthur's arrival had caused to his mother.

What passed between that lady and the boy is not of import. A veil should be thrown over those sacred emotions of love and grief. The maternal passion is a sacred mystery to me. What one sees symbolized in the Roman churches in the image of the Virgin Mother with a bosom bleeding with love, I think one may witness (and admire the Almighty bounty for) every day. I saw a Jewish lady, only yesterday, with a child at her knee, and from whose face towards the child there shone a sweetness so angelical, that it seemed to form a sort of glory round both. I protest I could have knelt before her too, and adored in her the Divine beneficence in endowing us with the maternal *storgè*, which began with our race and sanctifies the history of mankind.

As for Arthur Pendennis, after that awful shock which the sight of his dead father must have produced on him, and the pity and feeling which such an event no doubt occasioned, I am not sure that in the

very moment of the grief, and as he embraced his mother, and tenderly consoled her, and promised to love her for ever, there was not springing up in his breast a sort of secret triumph and exultation. He was the chief now and lord. He was Pendennis; and all round about him were his servants and handmaids. "You'll never send me away," little Laura said, tripping by him, and holding his hand. "You won't send me to school, will you, Arthur?"

Arthur kissed her and patted her head. No, she shouldn't go to school. As for going himself, that was quite out of the question. He had determined that that part of his life should not be renewed. In the midst of the general grief, and the corpse still lying above, he had leisure to conclude that he would have it *all* holidays for the future, that he wouldn't get up till he liked, or stand the bullying of the Doctor any more, and had made a hundred of such day dreams and resolves for the future. How one's thoughts will travel! and how quickly our wishes beget them! When he with Laura in his hand went into the kitchen on his way to the dog-kennel, the fowl-houses, and other his favourite haunts, all the servants there assembled in

great silence with their friends, and the labouring men and their wives, and Sally Potter who went with the post-bag to Clavering, and the baker's man from Clavering—all there assembled and drinking beer on the melancholy occasion—rose up on his entrance and bowed or curtseyed to him. They never used to do so last holidays, he felt at once and with indescribable pleasure. The cook cried out, "O Lord," and whispered, "How Master Arthur do grow!" Thomas, the groom, in the act of drinking, put down the jug alarmed before his master. Thomas's master felt the honour keenly. He went through and looked at the pointers. As Flora put her nose up to his waistcoat, and Ponto, yelling with pleasure, hurtled at his chain, Pen patronised the dogs, and said, "Poo Ponto, poo Flora," in his most condescending manner. And then he went and looked at Laura's hens, and at the pigs, and at the orchard, and at the dairy; perhaps he blushed to think that it was only last holidays he had in a manner robbed the great apple-tree, and been scolded by the dairymaid for taking cream.

They buried John Pendennis, Esquire, "formerly an eminent medical practitioner at Bath, and subsequently an able magistrate, a benevolent landlord, and a benefactor to many charities and public institutions in this neighbourhood and country," with one of the most handsome funerals that had been seen since Sir Roger Clavering was buried here, the clerk said, in the abbey church of Clavering St. Mary's. A fair marble slab, from which the above inscription is copied, was erected over the Fairoaks' pew in the church. On it you may see the Pendennis coat of arms and crest, an eagle looking towards the sun, with the motto "*nec tenui pennâ*," to the present day. Doctor Portman alluded to the deceased most handsomely and affectingly, as "our dear departed friend," in his sermon next Sunday; and Arthur Pendennis reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH PENDENNIS APPEARS AS A VERY YOUNG MAN INDEED.

ARTHUR was about sixteen years old, we have said, when he began to reign; in person, he had what his friends would call a dumpy, but his mamma styled a neat little figure. His hair was of a healthy brown colour, which looks like gold in the sunshine, his face was round, rosy, freckled, and good-humoured, his whiskers were decidedly of a reddish hue; in fact, without being a beauty, he had such a frank, good-natured kind face, and laughed so merrily at you out of his honest blue eyes, that no wonder Mrs. Pendennis thought him the pride of the whole country. Between the ages of sixteen and eighteen he rose from five feet six to five feet eight inches in height, at which altitude he paused. But his mother wondered at it. He was three inches taller than his father. Was it possible that any man could grow to be three inches taller than Mr. Pendennis?

You may be certain he never went back to school; the discipline of the establishment did not suit him, and he liked being at home

much better. The question of his return was debated, and his uncle was for his going back. The Doctor wrote his opinion that it was most important for Arthur's success in after-life that he should know a Greek play thoroughly, but Pen adroitly managed to hint to his mother what a dangerous place Grey Friars was, and what sad wild fellows some of the chaps there were, and the timid soul, taking alarm at once, acceded to his desire to stay at home.

Then Pen's uncle offered to use his influence with His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, who was pleased to be very kind to him, and proposed to get Pen a commission in the Foot Guards. Pen's heart leaped at this : he had been to hear the band at St. James's play on a Sunday, when he went out to his uncle. He had seen Tom Ricketts, of the fourth form, who used to wear a jacket and trowsers so ludicrously tight, that the elder boys could not forbear using him in the quality of a butt or "cockshy"—he had seen this very Ricketts arrayed in crimson and gold, with an immense bear-skin cap on his head, staggering under the colours of the regiment. Tom had recognised him and gave him a patronising nod. Tom, a little wretch whom he had cut over the back with a hockey-stick last quarter—and there he was in the centre of the square, rallying round the flag of his country, surrounded by bayonets, crossbelts, and scarlet, the band blowing trumpets and banging cymbals—talking familiarly to immense warriors with tufts to their chins and Waterloo medals. What would not Pen have given to enter such a service?

But Helen Pendennis, when this point was proposed to her by her son, put on a face full of terror and alarm. She said "she did not quarrel with others who thought differently, but that in her opinion a Christian had no right to make the army a profession. Mr. Pendennis never, never would have permitted his son to be a soldier. Finally, she should be very unhappy if he thought of it." Now Pen would have as soon cut off his nose and ears as deliberately, and of aforethought malice, made his mother unhappy ; and, as he was of such a generous disposition that he would give away anything to any one, he instantly made a present of his visionary red coat and epaulettes to his mother.

She thought him the noblest creature in the world. But Major Pendennis, when the offer of the commission was acknowledged and refused, wrote back a curt and somewhat angry letter to the widow, and thought his nephew was rather a spooney.

He was contented, however, when he saw the boy's performances out hunting at Christmas, when the Major came down as usual to

Fairoaks. Pen had a very good mare, and rode her with uncommon pluck and grace. He took his fences with great coolness and judgment. He wrote to the chaps at school about his top-boots, and his feats across country. He began to think seriously of a scarlet coat: and his mother must own that she thought it would become him remarkably well; though, of course, she passed hours of anguish during his absence, and daily expected to see him brought home on a shutter.

With these amusements, in rather too great plenty, it must not be assumed that Pen neglected his studies altogether. He had a natural taste for reading every possible kind of book which did not fall into his school-course. It was only when they forced his head into the waters of knowledge that he refused to drink. He devoured all the books at home, from Inchbald's Theatre to White's Farriery; he ransacked the neighbouring book-cases. He found at Clavering an old cargo of French novels, which he read with all his might; and he would sit for hours perched up on the topmost bar of Doctor Portman's library steps with a folio on his knees, whether it were Hakluyt's Travels, Hobbes's Leviathan, Augustini Opera, or Chaucer's Poems. He and the Vicar were very good friends, and from his Reverence, Pen learned that honest taste for port wine which distinguished him through life. And as for Mrs. Portman, who was not in the least jealous, though her Doctor avowed himself in love with Mrs. Pendennis, whom he pronounced to be by far the finest lady in the country—all her grief was, as she looked up fondly at Pen perched on the book-ladder, that her daughter, Minny, was too old for him—as indeed she was—Miss Maria Portman being at that period only two years younger than Pen's mother, and weighing as much as Pen and Mrs. Pendennis together.

Are these details insipid? Look back, good friend, at your own youth, and ask how was that? I like to think of a well-nurtured boy, brave and gentle, warm-hearted and loving, and looking the world in the face with kind honest eyes. What bright colours it wore then, and how you enjoyed it! A man has not many years of such time. He does not know them whilst they are with him. It is only when they are passed long away that he remembers how dear and happy they were.

Mr. Smirke, Dr. Portman's curate, was engaged, at a liberal salary, to walk or ride over from Clavering and pass several hours daily with the young gentleman. Smirke was a man perfectly faultless at a tea-table, wore a curl on his fair forehead, and tied his neck-cloth with a

melancholy grace. He was a decent scholar and mathematician, and taught Pen as much as the lad was ever disposed to learn, which was not much. For Pen had soon taken the measure of his tutor, who, when he came riding into the court-yard at Fairoaks on his pony, turned out his toes so absurdly, and left such a gap between his knees and the saddle, that it was impossible for any lad endowed with a sense of humour to respect such an equestrian. He nearly killed Smirke with terror by putting him on his mare, and taking him a ride over a common, where the county fox-hounds (then hunted by that staunch old sportsman, Mr. Hardhead, of Dumplingbeare) happened to meet. Mr. Smirke, on Pen's mare, Rebecca (she was named after Pen's favourite heroine, the daughter of Isaac of York), astounded the hounds as much as he disgusted the huntsman, laming one of the former by persisting in riding amongst the pack, and receiving a speech from the latter, more remarkable for energy of language, than any oration he had ever heard since he left the bargemen on the banks of Isis.

Smirke and his pupil read the ancient poets together, and rattled through them at a pleasant rate, very different from that steady grubbing pace with which the Cistercians used to go over the classic ground, scenting out each word as they went, and digging up every root in the way. Pen never liked to halt, but made his tutor construe when he was at fault, and thus galloped through the Iliad and the Odyssey, the tragic play-writers, and the charming wicked Aristophanes (whom he vowed to be the greatest poet of all). But he went so fast that, though he certainly galloped through a considerable extent of the ancient country, he clean forgot it in after-life, and had only such a vague remembrance of his early classic course as a man has in the House of Commons, let us say, who still keeps up two or three quotations; or a reviewer who, just for decency's sake, hints at a little Greek.

Besides the ancient poets, you may be sure Pen read the English with great gusto. Smirke sighed and shook his head sadly both about Byron and Moore. But Pen was a sworn fire-worshipper and a Corsair; he had them by heart, and used to take little Laura into the window and say, "Zuleika, I am not thy brother," in tones so tragic, that they caused the solemn little maid to open her great eyes still wider. She sat, until the proper hour for retirement, sewing at Mrs. Pendennis's knee, and listening to Pen reading out to her of nights without comprehending one word of what he read.

He read Shakspeare to his mother (which she said she liked, but

didn't), and Byron, and Pope, and his favourite Lalla Rookh, which pleased her indifferently. But as for Bishop Heber, and Mrs. Hemans above all, this lady used to melt right away, and be absorbed into her pocket-handkerchief, when Pen read those authors to her in his kind boyish voice. The "Christian Year" was a book which appeared about that time. The son and the mother whispered it to each other with awe—Faint, very faint, and seldom in after-life Pendennis heard that solemn church-music: but he always loved the remembrance of it, and of the times when it struck on his heart, and he walked over the fields full of hope and void of doubt, as the church-bells rang on Sunday morning.

It was at this period of his existence, that Pen broke out in the Poets' Corner of the County Chronicle, with some verses with which he was perfectly well satisfied. His are the verses signed "NEP.," addressed "To a Tear;" "On the Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo;" "To Madame Caradori singing at the Assize Meetings;" "On Saint Bartholomew's Day" (a tremendous denunciation of Popery, and a solemn warning to the people of England to rally against emancipating the Roman Catholics), &c., &c.—all which masterpieces, poor Mrs. Pendennis kept along with his first socks, the first cutting of his hair, his bottle, and other interesting relics of his infancy. He used to gallop Rebecca over the neighbouring Dumpling Downs, or into the county town, which, if you please, we shall call Chatteris, spouting his own poems, and filled with quite a Byronic afflatus as he thought.

His genius at this time was of a decidedly gloomy cast. He brought his mother a tragedy, at which, though he killed sixteen people before the second act, Helen laughed so, that he thrust the masterpiece into the fire in a pet. He projected an epic poem in blank verse, "Cortez, or the Conqueror of Mexico, and the Inca's daughter." He wrote part of "Seneca, or the Fatal Bath," and "Ariadne in Naxos;" classical pieces, with choruses and strophes and antistrophes, which sadly puzzled Mrs. Pendennis; and began a "History of the Jesuits," in which he lashed that Order with tremendous severity. His loyalty did his mother's heart good to witness. He was a staunch, unflinching Church-and-King man in those days; and at the election, when Sir Giles Beanfield stood on the Blue interest, against Lord Trehawk, Lord Eyrie's son, a Whig and a friend of Popery, Arthur Pendennis, with an immense bow for himself, which his mother made, and with a blue ribbon for Rebecca, rode alongside of the Reverend Doctor Portman, on his grey mare Dowdy, and at

the head of the Clavering voters, whom the Doctor brought up to plump for the Protestant Champion.

On that day Pen made his first speech at the Blue Hotel: and also, it appears, for the first time in his life—took a little more wine than was good for him. Mercy! what a scene it was at Fairoaks, when he rode back at ever so much o'clock at night. What moving about of lanterns in the court-yard and stables, though the moon was shining out; what a gathering of servants, as Pen came home, clattering over the bridge and up the stable-yard, with half-a-score of the Clavering voters yelling after him the Blue song of the election!

He wanted them all to come in and have some wine—some very good Madeira—some capital Madeira—John, go and get some Madeira,—and there is no knowing what the farmers would have done, had not Madam Pendennis made her appearance in a white wrapper, with a candle—and scared those zealous Blues so by the sight of her pale handsome face, that they touched their hats and rode off.

Besides these amusements and occupations in which Mr. Pen indulged, there was one which forms the main business and pleasure of youth, if the poets tell us aright, whom Pen was always studying; and which, ladies, you have rightly guessed to be that of Love. Pen sighed for it first in secret, and, like the love-sick swain in Ovid, opened his breast and said, "Aura, veni." What generous youth is there that has not courted some such windy mistress in his time?

Yes, Pen began to feel the necessity of a first love—of a consuming passion—of an object on which he could concentrate all those vague floating fancies under which he sweetly suffered—of a young lady to whom he could really make verses, and whom he could set up and adore, in place of those unsubstantial Ianthes and Zuleikas to whom he addressed the outpourings of his gushing muse. He read his favourite poems over and over again, he called upon Alma Venus the delight of gods and men, he translated Anacreon's odes, and picked out passages suitable to his complaint from Waller, Dryden, Prior, and the like. Smirke and he were never weary, in their interviews, of discoursing about love. The faithless tutor entertained him with sentimental conversations in place of lectures on algebra and Greek; for Smirke was in love too. Who could help it, being in daily intercourse with such a woman? Smirke was madly in love (as far as such a mild flame as Mr. Smirke's may be called madness) with Mrs. Pendennis. That honest lady, sitting down below stairs teaching little Laura to play the piano, or devising flannel petticoats for the

poor round about her, or otherwise busied with the calm routine of her modest and spotless Christian life, was little aware what storms were brewing in two bosoms upstairs in the study—in Pen's as he sate in his shooting-jacket, with his elbows on the green study-table, and his hands clutching his curly brown hair, Homer under his nose, —and in worthy Mr. Smirke's, with whom he was reading. Here they would talk about Helen and Andromache. "Andromache's like my mother," Pen used to avouch; "but I say, Smirke, by Jove I'd cut off my nose to see Helen;" and he would spout certain favourite lines which the reader will find in their proper place in the third book. He drew portraits of her—they are extant still—with straight noses and enormous eyes, and "Arthur Pendennis delineavit et pinxit" gallantly written underneath.

As for Mr. Smirke he naturally preferred Andromache. And in consequence he was uncommonly kind to Pen. He gave him his Elzevir Horace, of which the boy was fond, and his little Greek Testament which his own mamma at Clapham had purchased and presented to him. He bought him a silver pencil case; and in the matter of learning let him do just as much or as little as ever he pleased. He always seemed to be on the point of unbosoming himself to Pen: nay, he confessed to the latter that he had a—an attachment, an ardently cherished attachment, about which Pendennis longed to hear, and said, "Tell us, old chap, is she handsome? has she got blue eyes or black?" But Doctor Portman's curate, heaving a gentle sigh, cast up his eyes to the ceiling, and begged Pen faintly to change the conversation. Poor Smirke! He invited Pen to dine at his lodgings over Madame Fribsby's, the milliner's, in Clavering, and once when it was raining, and Mrs. Pendennis, who had driven in her pony-chaise into Clavering with respect to some arrangements, about leaving off mourning probably, was prevailed upon to enter the curate's apartments, he sent for pound-cakes instantly. The sofa on which she sate became sacred to him from that day: and he kept flowers in the glass which she drank from ever after.

As Mrs. Pendennis was never tired of hearing the praises of her son, we may be certain that this rogue of a tutor neglected no opportunity of conversing with her upon the subject. It might be a little tedious to him to hear the stories about Pen's generosity, about his bravery in fighting the big naughty boy, about his fun and jokes, about his prodigious skill in Latin, music, riding, &c.—but what price would he not pay to be in her company? and the widow, after these conversations, thought Mr. Smirke a very pleasing and well-informed man. As

for her son, she had not settled in her mind, whether he was to be Senior Wrangler and Archbishop of Canterbury, or Double First Class at Oxford, and Lord Chancellor. That all England did not possess his peer, was a fact about which there was, in her mind, no manner of question.

A simple person, of inexpensive habits, she began forthwith to save, and, perhaps, to be a little parsimonious, in favour of her boy. There were no entertainments, of course, at Fairoaks, during the year of her weeds. Nor, indeed, did the Doctor's silver dish-covers, of which he was so proud, and which were flourished all over with the arms of the Pendennises, and surmounted with their crest, come out of the plate-chest again for long, long years. The household was diminished, and its expenses curtailed. There was a very blank anchorite repast when Pen dined from home : and he himself headed the remonstrance from the kitchen regarding the deteriorated quality of the Fairoaks beer. She was becoming miserly for Pen. Indeed, who ever accused women of being just? They are always sacrificing themselves or somebody for somebody else's sake.

There happened to be no young woman in the small circle of friends who were in the widow's intimacy whom Pendennis could by any possibility gratify by endowing her with the inestimable treasure of a heart which he was longing to give away. Some young fellows in this predicament bestow their young affections upon Dolly, the dairymaid, or cast the eyes of tenderness upon Molly, the blacksmith's daughter. Pen thought a Pendennis much too grand a personage to stoop so low. He was too high-minded for a vulgar intrigue, and at the idea of a seduction, had he ever entertained it, his heart would have revolted as from the notion of any act of baseness or dishonour. Miss Mira Portman was too old, too large, and too fond of reading "Rollin's Ancient History." The Miss Boardbacks, Admiral Board-back's daughters (of St. Vincent's, or Fourth of June House, as it was called), disgusted Pen with the London airs which they brought into the country. Captain Glanders's (H. P., 50th Dragoon Guards) three girls were in brown-holland pinafores as yet, with the ends of their hair-plaits tied up in dirty pink ribbon. Not having acquired the art of dancing, the youth avoided such chances as he might have had of meeting with the fair sex at the Chatteris Assemblies ; in fine, he was not in love, because there was nobody at hand to fall in love with. And the young monkey used to ride out, day after day, in quest of Dulcinea ; and peep into the pony-chaises and gentlefolks' carriages, as they drove along the broad turnpike roads, with a heart beating

within him, and a secret tremor and hope that *she* might be in that yellow post-chaise coming swinging up the hill, or one of those three girls in beaver bonnets in the back seat of the double gig, which the fat old gentleman in black was driving, at four miles an hour. The post-chaise contained a snuffy old dowager of seventy, with a maid, her contemporary. The three girls in the beaver bonnets were no handsomer than the turnips that skirted the roadside. Do as he might, and ride where he would, the fairy princess whom he was to rescue and win, had not yet appeared to honest Pen.

Upon these points he did not discourse to his mother. He had a world of his own. What ardent, imaginative soul has not a secret pleasure-place in which it disports? Let no clumsy prying or dull meddling of ours try to disturb it in our children. Actæon was a brute for wanting to push in where Diana was bathing. Leave him occasionally alone, my good madam, if you have a poet for a child. Even your admirable advice may be a bore sometimes. Yonder little child may have thoughts too deep even for your great mind, and fancies so coy and timid that they will not bare themselves when your ladyship sits by.

Helen Pendennis by the force of sheer love divined a great number of her son's secrets. But she kept these things in her heart (if we may so speak), and did not speak of them. Besides, she had made up her mind that he was to marry little Laura: she would be eighteen when Pen was six-and-twenty; and had finished his college career; and had made his grand tour; and was settled either in London, astonishing all the metropolis by his learning and eloquence at the bar, or better still in a sweet country parsonage surrounded with hollyhocks and roses, close to a delightful romantic ivy-covered church, from the pulpit of which Pen would utter the most beautiful sermons ever preached.

While these natural sentiments were waging war and trouble in honest Pen's bosom, it chanced one day that he rode into Chatteris for the purpose of carrying to the County Chronicle a tremendous and thrilling poem for the next week's paper; and putting up his horse according to custom, at the stables of the George Hotel there, he fell in with an old acquaintance. A grand black tandem, with scarlet wheels, came rattling into the inn yard, as Pen stood there in converse with the ostler about Rebecca; and the voice of the driver called out, "Hallo, Pendennis, is that you?" in a loud patronising manner. Pen had some difficulty in recognising, under the broad-brimmed hat

and the vast greatcoats and neckcloths, with which the new comer was habited, the person and figure of his quondam schoolfellow, Mr. Foker.

A year's absence had made no small difference in that gentleman. A youth who had been deservedly whipped a few months previously, and who spent his pocket-money on tarts and hardbake, now appeared before Pen in one of those costumes to which the public consent, which I take to be quite as influential in this respect as "Johnson's Dictionary," has awarded the title of "Swell." He had a bull-dog between his legs, and in his scarlet shawl neckcloth, was a pin representing another bull-dog in gold: he wore a fur waistcoat laced over with gold chains; a green cut-away coat with basket buttons, and a white upper-coat ornamented with cheese-plate buttons, on each of which was engraved some stirring incident of the road or the chase; all of which ornaments set off this young fellow's figure to such advantage, that you would hesitate to say which character in life he most resembled, and whether he was a boxer *en goguette*, or a coachman in his gala suit.

"Left that place for good, Pendennis?" Mr. Foker said, descending from his landau and giving Pendennis a finger.

"Yes, this year or more," Pen said.

"Beastly old hole," Mr. Foker remarked. "Hate it. Hate the Doctor: hate Towzer, the second master; hate everybody there. Not a fit place for a gentleman."

"Not at all," said Pen, with an air of the utmost consequence.

"By gad, sir, I sometimes dream, now, that the Doctor's walking into me," Foker continued (and Pen smiled as he thought that he himself had likewise fearful dreams of this nature). "When I think of the diet there, by gad, sir, I wonder how I stood it. Mangy mutton brutal beef, pudding on Thursdays and Sundays, and that fit to poison you. Just look at my leader—did you ever see a prettier animal? Drove over from Baymouth. Came the nine mile in two-and-forty minutes. Not bad going, sir."

"Are you stopping at Baymouth, Foker?" Pendennis asked.

"I'm coaching there," said the other with a nod.

"*What?*" asked Pen, and in a tone of such wonder, that Foker burst out laughing, and said, "He was blowed if he didn't think Pen was such a flat as not to know what coaching meant."

"I'm come down with a coach from Oxbridge. A tutor, don't you see, old boy? He's coaching me, and some other men, for the little go. Me and Spavin have the drag between us. And I thought I'd

just tool over, and go to the play. Did you ever see Rowkins do the hornpipe?" and Mr. Foker began to perform some steps of that popular dance in the inn yard, looking round for the sympathy of his groom, and the stable men.

Pen thought he would like to go to the play too: and could ride home afterwards, as there was a moonlight. So he accepted Foker's invitation to dinner, and the young men entered the inn together, where Mr. Foker stopped at the bar, and called upon Miss Rummer, the landlady's fair daughter, who presided there, to give him a glass of "his mixture."

Pen and his family had been known at the George ever since they came into the county; and Mr. Pendennis's carriage and horses always put up there when he paid a visit to the county town. The landlady dropped the heir of Fairoaks a very respectful curtsey, and complimented him upon his growth and manly appearance, and asked news of the family at Fairoaks, and of Dr. Portman and the Clavering people, to all of which questions the young gentleman answered with much affability. But he spoke to Mr. and Mrs. Rummer with that sort of good nature with which a young Prince addresses his father's subjects; never dreaming that those "bonnes gens" were his equals in life.

Mr. Foker's behaviour was quite different. He inquired for Rummer and the cold in his nose, told Mrs. Rummer a riddle, asked Miss Rummer when she would be ready to marry him, and paid his compliments to Miss Brett, the other young lady in the bar, all in a minute of time, and with a liveliness and facetiousness which set all these ladies in a giggle; and he gave a cluck, expressive of great satisfaction, as he tossed off his mixture, which Miss Rummer prepared and handed to him.

"Have a drop," said he to Pen. "Give the young one a glass, R., and score it up to yours truly."

Poor Pen took a glass, and everybody laughed at the face which he made as he put it down—Gin, bitters, and some other cordial, was the compound with which Mr. Foker was so delighted as to call it by the name of Foker's own. As Pen choked, sputtered, and made faces, the other took occasion to remark to Mr. Rummer that the young fellow was green, very green, but that he would soon form him; and then they proceeded to order dinner—which Mr. Foker determined should consist of turtle and venison; cautioning the landlady to be very particular about icing the wine.

Then Messrs. Foker and Pen strolled down the High Street

together—the former having a cigar in his mouth, which he had drawn out of a case almost as big as a portmanteau. He went in to replenish it at Mr. Lewis's, and talked to that gentleman for a while, sitting down on the counter: he then looked in at the fruiterer's, to see the pretty girl there: then they passed the County Chronicle office, for which Pen had his packet ready, in the shape of "Lines to Thyrza," but poor Pen did not like to put the letter into the editor's box while walking in company with such a fine gentleman as Mr. Foker. They met heavy dragoons of the regiment always quartered at Chatteris; and stopped and talked about the Baymouth balls, and what a pretty girl was Miss Brown, and what a dem fine woman Mrs. Jones was. It was in vain that Pen recalled to his own mind how stupid Foker used to be at school—how he could scarcely read, how he was not cleanly in his person, and notorious for his blunders and dullness. Mr. Foker was not much more refined now than in his school days: and yet Pen felt a secret pride in strutting down High Street with a young fellow who owned tandems, talked to officers, and ordered turtle and champagne for dinner. He listened, and with respect too, to Mr. Foker's accounts of what the men did at the University of which Mr. F. was an ornament, and encountered a long series of stories about boat-racing, bumping, College grass-plats, and milk-punch—and began to wish to go up himself to College to a place where there were such manly pleasures and enjoyments. Farmer Gurnett, who lives close by Fairoaks, riding by at this minute and touching his hat to Pen, the latter stopped him, and sent a message to his mother to say that he had met with an old schoolfellow, and should dine in Chatteris.

The two young gentlemen continued their walk, and were passing round the Cathedral Yard, where they could hear the music of the afternoon service (a music which always exceedingly affected Pen), but whither Mr. Foker came for the purpose of inspecting the nursery maids who frequent the Elms Walk there, and here they strolled until with a final burst of music the small congregation was played out.

Old Doctor Portman was one of the few who came from the venerable gate. Spying Pen, he came and shook him by the hand, and eyed with wonder Pen's friend, from whose mouth and cigar clouds of fragrance issued, which curled round the Doctor's honest face and shovel hat.

"An old schoolfellow of mine, Mr. Foker," said Pen. The Doctor said "H'm": and scowled at the cigar. He did not mind a pipe in his study, but the cigar was an abomination to the worthy gentleman.

"I came up on Bishop's business," the Doctor said. "We'll ride home, Arthur, if you like?"

"I—I'm engaged to my friend here," Pen answered.

"You had better come home with me," said the Doctor.

"His mother knows he's out, sir," Mr. Foker remarked: "don't she, Pendennis?"

"But that does not prove that he had not better come home with me," the Doctor growled, and he walked off with great dignity.

"Old boy don't like the weed, I suppose," Foker said. "Ha! who's here?—here's the General, and Bingley, the manager. How do, Cos? How do, Bingley?"

"How does my worthy and gallant young Foker?" said the gentleman addressed as the General; and who wore a shabby military cape with a mangy collar, and a hat cocked very much over one eye.

"Trust you are very well, my very dear sir," said the other gentleman, "and that the Theatre Royal will have the honour of your patronage to-night. We perform 'The Stranger,' in which your humble servant will—"

"Can't stand you in tights and Hessians, Bingley," young Mr. Foker said. On which the General, with the Irish accent, said, "But I think ye'll like Miss Fotheringay, in Mrs. Haller, or me name's not Jack Costigan."

Pen looked at these individuals with the greatest interest. He had never seen an actor before; and he saw Dr. Portman's red face looking over the Doctor's shoulder, as he retreated from the Cathedral Yard, evidently quite dissatisfied with the acquaintances into whose hands Pen had fallen.

Perhaps it would have been much better for him had he taken the parson's advice and company home. But which of us knows his fate?

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. HALLER.

HAVING returned to the George, Mr. Foker and his guest sate down to a handsome repast in the coffee-room; where Mr. Rummer brought in the first dish, and bowed as gravely as if he was waiting upon the Lord-Lieutenant of the county. Pen could not but respect Foker's connoisseurship as he pronounced the champagne to be condemned gooseberry, and winked at the port with one eye. The latter he declared to be of the right sort; and told the waiters, there was no way of humbugging *him*. All these attendants he knew by their Christian names, and showed a great interest in their families; and as the London coaches drove up, which in those early days used to set off from the George, Mr. Foker flung the coffee-room window open, and called the guards and coachmen by their Christian names, too, asking about their respective families, and imitating with great liveliness and accuracy the tooting of the horns as Jem the ostler whipped the horses' cloths off, and the carriages drove gaily away.

"A bottle of sherry, a bottle of sham, a bottle of port and a shass caffy, it ain't so bad, hay, Pen?" Foker said, and pronounced, after all these delicacies and a quantity of nuts and fruit had been dis-

patched, that it was time to "toddle." Pen sprang up with very bright eyes, and a flushed face; and they moved off towards the theatre, where they paid their money to the wheezy old lady slumbering in the money-taker's box. "Mrs. Dropsicum, Bingley's mother-in-law, great in Lady Macbeth," Foker said to his companion. Foker knew her, too.

They had almost their choice of places in the boxes of the theatre, which was no better filled than country theatres usually are in spite of the "universal burst of attraction and galvanic thrills of delight" advertised by Bingley in the play-bills. A score or so of people dotted the pit-benches, a few more kept a kicking and whistling in the galleries, and a dozen others, who came in with free admissions, were in the boxes where our young gentlemen sate. Lieutenant Rodgers and Podgers, and young Cornet Tidmus, of the Dragoons, occupied a private box. The performers acted to them, and these gentlemen seemed to hold conversations with the players when not engaged in the dialogue, and applauded them by name loudly.

Bingley the manager, who assumed all the chief tragic and comic parts except when he modestly retreated to make way for the London stars, who came down occasionally to Chatteris, was great in the character of the "Stranger." He was attired in the tight pantaloons and Hessian boots which the stage legend has given to that injured man, with a large cloak and beaver and a hearse-feather in it drooping over his raddled old face, and only partially concealing his great buckled brown wig. He had the stage-jewellery on too, of which he selected the largest and most shiny rings for himself, and allowed his little finger to quiver out of his cloak with a sham diamond ring covering the first joint of the finger and twiddling in the faces of the pit. Bingley made it a favour to the young men of his company to go on in light comedy parts with that ring. They flattered him by asking its history. The stage has its traditional jewels, as the Crown and all great families have. This had belonged to George Frederick Cooke, who had had it from Mr. Quin, who may have bought it for a shilling. Bingley fancied the world was fascinated with its glitter.

He was reading out of the stage-book—that wonderful stage-book—which is not bound like any other book in the world, but is rouged and tawdry like the hero or heroine who holds it; and who holds it as people never do hold books: and points with his finger to a passage, and wags his head ominously at the audience, and then lifts up eyes and finger to the ceiling, professing to derive some intense consolation from the work between which and heaven there is a strong affinity.

As soon as the Stranger saw the young men, he acted at them; eyeing them solemnly over his gilt volume as he lay on the stage-bank showing his hand, his ring, and his Hessians. He calculated the effect that every one of these ornaments would produce upon his victims: he was determined to fascinate them, for he knew they had paid their money; and he saw their families coming in from the country and filling the cane chairs in his boxes.

As he lay on the bank reading, his servant, Francis, made remarks upon his master.

"Again reading," said Francis, "thus it is, from morn to night. To him nature has no beauty—life no charm. For three years I have never seen him smile" (the gloom of Bingley's face was fearful to witness during these comments of the faithful domestic.) "Nothing diverts him. O, if he would but attach himself to any living thing, were it an animal—for something man must love."

[*Enter Tobias* (*Goll*) *from the hut.*] He cries, "O, how refreshing, after seven long weeks, to feel these warm sunbeams once again. Thanks, bounteous heaven, for the joy I taste!" He presses his cap between his hands, looks up and prays. The stranger eyes him attentively.

Francis to the Stranger. "This old man's share of earthly happiness can be but little. Yet mark how grateful he is for his portion of it."

Bingley. "Because though old, he is but a child in the leading-string of hope." (He looks steadily at Foker, who, however, continues to suck the top of his stick in an unconcerned manner.)

Francis. "Hope is the nurse of life."

Bingley. "And her cradle—is the grave."

The Stranger uttered this with the moan of a bassoon in agony, and fixed his glance on Pendennis so steadily, that the poor lad was quite put out of countenance. He thought the whole house must be looking at him; and cast his eyes down. As soon as ever he raised them Bingley's were at him again. All through the scene the manager played at him. How relieved the lad was when the scene ended, and Foker, tapping with his cane, cried out "Bravo, Bingley!"

"Give him a hand, Pendennis; you know every chap likes a hand," Mr. Foker said; and the good-natured young gentleman, and Pendennis laughing, and the dragoons in the opposite box, began clapping hands to the best of their power.

A chamber in Wintersen Castle closed over Tobias's hut and the Stranger and his boots: and servants appeared bustling about with

chairs and tables—"That's Hicks and Miss Thackthwaite," whispered Foker. "Pretty girl, ain't she, Pendennis? But stop—hurray—bravo! here's the Fotheringay."

The pit thrilled and thumped its umbrellas; a volley of applause was fired from the gallery: the Dragoon officers and Foker clapped their hands furiously: you would have thought the house was full, so loud were their plaudits. The red face and ragged whiskers of Mr. Costigan were seen peering from the side-scene. Pen's eyes opened wide and bright, as Mrs. Haller entered with a downcast look, then rallying at the sound of the applause, swept the house with a grateful glance, and, folding her hands across her breast, sank down in a magnificent curtsey. More applause, more umbrellas; Pen this time, flaming with wine and enthusiasm, clapped hands and sang "Bravo" louder than all. Mrs. Haller saw him, and everybody else, and old Mr. Bows, the little first fiddler of the orchestra (which was this night increased by a detachment of the band of the Dragoons, by the kind permission of Colonel Swallowtail), looked up from the desk where he was perched, with his crutch beside him, and smiled at the enthusiasm of the lad.

Those who have only seen Miss Fotheringay in later days, since her marriage and introduction into London life, have little idea how beautiful a creature she was at the time when our friend Pen first set eyes on her. She was of the tallest of women, and at her then age of six-and-twenty—for six-and-twenty she was, though she vows she was only nineteen—in the prime and fulness of her beauty. Her forehead was vast, and her black hair waved over it with a natural ripple, and was confined in shining and voluminous braids at the back of a neck such as you see on the shoulders of the Louvre Venus—that delight of gods and men. Her eyes, when she lifted them up to gaze on you, and ere she dropped their purple deep-fringed lids, shone with tenderness and mystery unfathomable. Love and Genius seemed to look out from them and then retire coyly, as if ashamed to have been seen at the lattice. Who could have had such a commanding brow but a woman of high intellect? She never laughed (indeed her teeth were not good), but a smile of endless tenderness and sweetness played round her beautiful lips, and in the dimples of her cheeks and her lovely chin. Her nose defied description in those days. Her ears were like two little pearl shells, which the earrings she wore (though the handsomest properties in the theatre) only insulted. She was dressed in long flowing robes of black, which she managed and swept to and fro with wonderful grace, and out of the folds of which you

only saw her sandals occasionally; they were of rather a large size; but Pen thought them as ravishing as the slippers of Cinderella. But it was her hand and arm that this magnificent creature most excelled in, and somehow you could never see her but through them. They surrounded her. When she folded them over her bosom in resignation; when she dropped them in mute agony, or raised them in superb command; when in sportive gaiety her hands fluttered and waved before her, like—what shall we say?—like the snowy doves before the chariot of Venus—it was with these arms and hands that she beckoned, repelled, entreated, embraced her admirers—no single one, for she was armed with her own virtue, and with her father's valour, whose sword would have leapt from its scabbard at any insult offered to his child—but the whole house; which rose to her, as the phrase was, as she curtseyed and bowed, and charmed it.

Thus she stood for a minute—complete and beautiful—as Pen stared at her. "I say, Pen, isn't she a stunner?" asked Mr. Foker.

"Hush!" Pen said. "She's speaking."

She began her business in a deep sweet voice. Those who know the play of the "Stranger," are aware that the remarks made by the various characters are not valuable in themselves, either for their sound sense, their novelty of observation, or their poetic fancy.

Nobody ever talked so. If we meet idiots in life, as will happen, it is a great mercy that they do not use such absurdly fine words. The Stranger's talk is sham, like the book he reads, and the hair he wears, and the bank he sits on, and the diamond ring he makes play with—but, in the midst of the balderdash, there runs that reality of love, children, and forgiveness of wrong, which will be listened to wherever it is preached, and sets all the world sympathising.

With what smothered sorrow, with what gushing pathos, Mrs. Haller delivered her part! At first, when as Count Wintersen's housekeeper, and preparing for his Excellency's arrival, she has to give orders about the beds and furniture, and the dinner, &c., to be got ready, she did so with the calm agony of despair. But when she could get rid of the stupid servants, and give vent to her feelings to the pit and the house, she overflowed to each individual as if he were her particular confidant, and she was crying out her griefs on his shoulder: the little fiddler in the orchestra (whom she did not seem to watch, though he followed her ceaselessly) twitched, twisted, nodded, pointed about, and when she came to the favourite passage "I have a William, too, if he be still alive—Ah, yes, if he be still alive. His little sisters, too! Why, Fancy, dost thou rack me so? Why dost

thou image my poor children fainting in sickness, and crying to—to—their mum-um-*other*,"—when she came to this passage little Bows buried his face in his blue cotton handkerchief, after crying out "Bravo."

All the house was affected. Foker, for his part, taking out a large yellow bandanna, wept piteously. As for Pen, he was gone too far for that. He followed the woman about and about—when she was off the stage, it and the house were blank; the lights and the red officers reeled wildly before his sight. He watched her at the side scene—where she stood waiting to come on the stage, and where her father took off her shawl: when the reconciliation arrived, and she flung herself down on Mr. Bingley's shoulders, whilst the children clung to their knees, and the Countess (Mrs. Bingley) and Baron Steinforth (performed with great liveliness and spirit by Garbetts,)—while the rest of the characters formed a group round them, Pen's hot eyes only saw Fotheringay, Fotheringay. The curtain fell upon him like a pall. He did not hear a word of what Bingley said, who came forward to announce the play for the next evening, and who took the tumultuous applause, as usual, for himself. Pen was not even distinctly aware that the house was calling for Miss Fotheringay, nor did the manager seem to comprehend that anybody else but himself had caused the success of the play. At last he understood it—stepped back with a grin, and presently appeared with Mrs. Haller on his arm. How beautiful she looked! Her hair had fallen down, the officers threw her flowers. She clutched them to her heart. She put back her hair, and smiled all round. Her eyes met Pen's. Down went the curtain again: and she was gone. Not one note could he hear of the overture which the brass band of the dragoons blew by kind permission of Colonel Swallowtail.

"She *is* a crusher, ain't she now?" Mr. Foker asked of his companion.

Pen did not know exactly what Foker said, and answered vaguely. He could not tell the other what he felt; he could not have spoken, just then, to any mortal. Besides, Pendennis did not quite know what he felt yet; it was something overwhelming, maddening, delicious; a fever of wild joy and undefined longing.

And now Rowkins and Miss Thackthwaite came on to dance the favourite double hornpipe, and Foker abandoned himself to the delights of this ballet, just as he had to the tears of the tragedy a few minutes before. Pen did not care for it, or indeed think about the dance, except to remember that that woman was acting with her in the scene

where she first came in. It was a mist before his eyes. At the end of the dance he looked at his watch and said it was time for him to go.

"Hang it, stay to see The Bravo of the Battle-Axe," Foker said; "Bingley's splendid in it; he wears red tights, and has to carry Mrs. B. over the Pine-bridge of the Cataract, only she's too heavy. It's great fun, do stop."

Pen looked at the bill with one lingering fond hope that Miss Fotheringay's name might be hidden, somewhere, in the list of the actors of the after-piece, but there was no such name. Go he must. He had a long ride home. He squeezed Foker's hand. He was choking to speak, but he couldn't. He quitted the theatre and walked frantically about the town, he knew not how long; then he mounted at the George and rode homewards, and Clavering clock sang out one as he came into the yard at Fairoaks. The lady of the house might have been awake, but she only heard him from the passage outside his room as he dashed into bed and pulled the clothes over his head.

Pen had not been in the habit of passing wakeful nights, so he at once fell off into a sound sleep. Even in later days, and with a great deal of care and other thoughtful matter to keep him awake, a man from long practice or fatigue or resolution *begins* by going to sleep as usual: and gets a nap in advance of Anxiety. But she soon comes up with him and jogs his shoulder, and says "Come, my man, no more of this laziness, you must wake up and have a talk with me." Then they fall to together in the midnight. Well, whatever might afterwards happen to him, poor little Pen was not come to this state yet; he tumbled into a sound sleep—did not wake until an early hour in the morning, when the rooks began to caw from the little wood beyond his bed-room windows; and—at that very instant and as his eyes started open, the beloved image was in his mind. "My dear boy," he heard her say, "you were in a sound sleep, and I would not disturb you: but I have been close by your pillow all this while: and I don't intend that you shall leave me. I am Love! I bring with me fever and passion: wild longing, maddening desire; restless craving and seeking. Many a long day ere this I heard you calling out for me; and behold now I am come."

Was Pen frightened at the summons? Not he. He did not know what was coming: it was all wild pleasure and delight as yet. And as, when three years previously, and on entering the fifth form at the Cistercians, his father had made him a present of a gold watch which the boy took from under his pillow and examined on the instant of

waking: for ever rubbing and polishing it up in private and retiring into corners to listen to its ticking: so the young man exulted over his new delight; felt in his waistcoat pocket to see that it was safe; wound it up at nights, and at the very first moment of waking hugged it and looked at it.—By the way, that first watch of Pen's was a showy ill-manufactured piece: it never went well from the beginning, and was always getting out of order. And after putting it aside into a drawer and forgetting it for some time, he swopped it finally away for a more useful time-keeper.

Pen felt himself to be ever so many years older since yesterday. There was no mistake about it now. He was as much in love as the best hero in the best romance he ever read. He told John to bring his shaving water with the utmost confidence. He dressed himself in some of his finest clothes that morning: and came splendidly down to breakfast, patronising his mother and little Laura, who had been strumming her music lesson for hours before; and who after he had read the prayers (of which he did not heed one single syllable), wondered at his grand appearance, and asked him to tell her what the play was about?

Pen laughed and declined to tell Laura what the play was about. In fact it was quite as well that she should not know. Then she asked him why he had got on his fine pin and beautiful new waistcoat?

Pen blushed, and told his mother that the old schoolfellow with whom he had dined at Chatteris was reading with a tutor at Baymouth, a very learned man; and as he was himself to go to College, and as there were several young men pursuing their studies at Baymouth—he was anxious to ride over—and—and just see what the course of their reading was.

Laura made a long face. Helen Pendennis looked hard at her son, troubled more than ever with the vague doubt and terror which had been haunting her ever since the last night, when Farmer Gurnett brought back the news that Pen would not return home to dinner. Arthur's eyes defied her. She tried to console herself, and drive off her fears. The boy had never told her an untruth. Pen conducted himself during breakfast in a very haughty and supercilious manner; and, taking leave of the elder and younger lady, was presently heard riding out of the stable-court. He went gently at first, but galloped like a madman as soon as he thought that he was out of hearing.

Smirke, thinking of his own affairs, and softly riding with his toes out, to give Pen his three hours' reading at Fairoaks, met his pupil,

who shot by him like the wind. Smirke's pony shied, as the other thundered past him; the gentle curate went over his head among the stinging-nettles in the hedge. Pen laughed as they met, pointed towards the Baymouth road, and was gone half-a-mile in that direction before poor Smirke had picked himself up.

Pen had resolved in his mind that he *must* see Foker that morning; he must hear about her; know about her; be with somebody who knew her; and honest Smirke, for his part, sitting up among the stinging-nettles, as his pony cropped quietly in the hedge, thought dismally to himself, ought he to go to Fairoaks now that his pupil was evidently gone away for the day? Yes, he thought he might go, too. He might go and ask Mrs. Pendennis when Arthur would be back; and hear Miss Laura her Watts's Catechism. He got up on the little pony—both were used to his slipping off—and advanced upon the house from which his scholar had just rushed away in a whirlwind.

Thus love makes fools of all of us, big and little; and the curate had tumbled over head and heels in pursuit of it, and Pen had started in the first heat of the mad race.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. HALLER AT HOME.

WITHOUT slackening his pace Pen galloped on to Baymouth, put the mare up at the inn stables, and ran straightway to Mr. Foker's lodgings, of whom he had taken the direction on the previous day. On reaching these apartments, which were over a chemist's shop whose stock of cigars and soda-water went off rapidly by the kind patronage of his young inmates, Pen only found Mr. Spavin, Foker's friend, and part owner of the tandem, which the latter had driven into Chatteris, who was smoking, and teaching a little dog, a friend of his, tricks with a bit of biscuit.

Pen's healthy red face, fresh from the gallop, compared oddly with the waxy debauched little features of Foker's chum ; Mr. Spavin remarked the circumstance. "Who's that man?" he thought, "he looks as fresh as a bean. *His* hand don't shake of a morning, I'd bet five to one."

Foker had not come home at all. Here was a disappointment !— Mr. Spavin could not say when his friend would return. Sometimes

he stopped a day, sometimes a week. Of what college was Pen? Would he have anything? There was a very fair tap of ale. Mr. Spavin was enabled to know Pendennis's name, on the card which the latter took out and laid down (perhaps Pen in these days was rather proud of having a card)—and so the young men took leave.

Then Pen went down the rock, and walked about on the sand, biting his nails by the shore of the much-sounding sea. It stretched before him bright and immeasurable. The blue waters came rolling into the bay, foaming and roaring hoarsely: Pen looked them in the face with blank eyes, hardly regarding them. What a tide there was pouring into the lad's own mind at the time, and what a little power had he to check it! Pen flung stones into the sea, but it still kept coming on. He was in a rage at not seeing Foker. He wanted to see Foker. He must see Foker. "Suppose I go on—on the Chatteris road, just to see if I can meet him," Pen thought. Rebecca was saddled in another half hour, and galloping on the grass by the Chatteris road. About four miles from Baymouth, the Clavering road branches off, as everybody knows, and the mare naturally was for taking that turn, but, cutting her over the shoulder, Pen passed the turning, and rode on to the turnpike without seeing any sign of the black tandem and red wheels.

As he was at the turnpike he might as well go on: that was quite clear. So Pen rode to the George, and the ostler told him that Mr. Foker was there sure enough, and that "he'd been a makin a tremendous row the night afore, a drinkin and a singin, and wanting to fight Tom the post-boy: which I'm thinking he'd have had the worst of it," the man added with a grin. "Have you carried up your master's ot water to shave with?" he added, in a very satirical manner, to Mr. Foker's domestic, who here came down the yard bearing his master's clothes, most beautifully brushed and arranged. "Show Mr Pendennis up to 'un." And Pen followed the man at last to the apartment, where, in the midst of an immense bed, Mr. Harry Foker lay reposing.

The feather bed and bolsters swelled up all round Mr. Foker, so that you could hardly see his little sallow face and red silk nightcap.

"Hullo!" said Pen.

"Who goes there? brother, quickly tell!" sang out the voice from the bed. "What! Pendennis again? Is your Mamma acquainted with your absence? Did you sup with us last night? No—stop—who supped with us last night, Stoopid?"

"There was the three officers, sir, and Mr. Bingley, sir, and Mr.

Costigan, sir," the man answered, who received all Mr. Foker's remarks with perfect gravity.

"Ah yes: the cup and merry jest went round. We chanted: and I remember I wanted to fight a post-boy. Did I thrash him, Stoopid?"

"No, sir. Fight didn't come off, sir," said Stoopid, still with perfect gravity. He was arranging Mr. Foker's dressing-case—a trunk, the gift of a fond mother, without which the young fellow never travelled. It contained a prodigious apparatus in plate; a silver dish, a silver mug, silver boxes and bottles for all sorts of essences, and a choice of razors ready against the time when Mr. Foker's beard should come.

"Do it some other day," said the young fellow, yawning and throwing up his little lean arms over his head. "No, there was no fight; but there was chanting. Bingley chanted, I chanted, the General chanted—Costigan I mean.—Did you ever hear him sing 'The Little Pig under the Bed,' Pen?"

"The man we met yesterday?" said Pen, all in a tremor, "the father of—"

"Of the Fotheringay,—the very man. Ain't she a Venus, Pen?"

"Please sir, Mr. Costigan's in the sittin-room, sir, and says, sir, you asked him to breakfast, sir. Called five times, sir; but wouldn't wake you on no account; and has been year since eleven o'clock, sir—"

"How much is it now?"

"One, sir."

"What would the best of mothers say," cried the little sluggard, "if she saw me in bed at this hour? She sent me down here with a grinder. She wants me to cultivate my neglected genius—He, he! I say, Pen, this isn't quite like seven o'clock school,—is it, old boy?"—and the young fellow burst out into a boyish laugh of enjoyment. Then he added—"Go in and talk to the General whilst I dress. And I say, Pendennis, ask him to sing you 'The Little Pig under the Bed;' it's capital." Pen went off in great perturbation, to meet Mr. Costigan, and Mr. Foker commenced his toilet.

Of Mr. Foker's two grandfathers, the one from whom he inherited a fortune was a brewer; the other was an earl, who endowed him with the most doting mother in the world. The Fokers had been at the Cistercian school from father to son; at which place, our friend, whose name could be seen over the playground wall, on a public-house sign, under which "Foker's Entire" was painted, had been dreadfully bullied on account of his trade, his uncomely countenance, his inap-

titude for learning and cleanliness, his gluttony and other weak points. But those who know how a susceptible youth, under the tyranny of his schoolfellows, becomes silent and a sneak, may understand how, in a very few months after his liberation from bondage, he developed himself as he had done; and became the humorous, the sarcastic, the brilliant Foker, with whom we have made acquaintance. A dunce he always was, it is true; for learning cannot be acquired by leaving school and entering at college as a fellow-commoner; but he was now (in his own peculiar manner) as great a dandy as he before had been a slattern, and when he entered his sitting-room to join his two guests, arrived scented and arrayed in fine linen, and perfectly splendid in appearance.

General or Captain Costigan—for the latter was the rank which he preferred to assume—was seated in the window with the newspaper held before him at arm's length. The Captain's eyes were somewhat dim; and he was spelling the paper, with the help of his lips, as well as of those bloodshot eyes of his, as you see gentlemen do to whom reading is a rare and difficult occupation. His hat was cocked very much on one ear; and as one of his feet lay up in the window-seat, the observer of such matters might remark, by the size and shabbiness of the boots which the Captain wore, that times did not go very well with him. Poverty seems as if it were disposed, before it takes possession of a man entirely, to attack his extremities first: the coverings of his head, feet, and hands, are its first prey. All these parts of the Captain's person were particularly rakish and shabby. As soon as he saw Pen he descended from the window-seat and saluted the new comer, first in a military manner, by conveying a couple of his fingers (covered with a broken black glove) to his hat, and then removing that ornament altogether. The Captain was inclined to be bald, but he brought a quantity of lank iron-grey hair over his pate, and had a couple of wisps of the same falling down on each side of his face. Much whisky had spoiled what complexion Mr. Costigan may have possessed in his youth. His once handsome face had now a copper tinge. He wore a very high stock, scarred and stained in many places; and a dress-coat tightly buttoned up in those parts where the buttons had not parted company from the garment.

"The young gentleman to whom I had the honour to be introjuiced yesterday in the Cathedral Yard," said the Captain, with a splendid bow and wave of his hat. "I hope I see you well, sir. I marked ye in the thayater last night during me daughter's perfawrumance; and missed ye on my return. I did but conduct her home, sir, for Jack

Costigan, though poor, is a gentleman; and when I reintered the house to pay me respects to me joyous young friend, Mr. Foker—ye were gone. We had a jolly night of ut, sir—Mr. Foker, the three gallant young dragoons, and your 'umble servant. Gad, sir, it put me in mind of one of our old nights when I bore Her Majesty's commission in the Foighting Hundtherd and Third." And he pulled out an old snuff-box, which he presented with a stately air to his new acquaintance.

Arthur was a great deal too much flurried to speak. This shabby-looking buck was—was her father. "I hope, Miss F——, Miss Costigan is well, sir," Pen said, flushing up. "She—she gave me greater pleasure, than—than I—I—I ever enjoyed at a play. I think, sir—I think she's the finest actress in the world," he gasped out.

"Your hand, young man! for ye speak from your heart," cried the Captain. "Thank ye, sir; an old soldier and a fond father thanks ye. She *is* the finest actress in the world. I've seen the Siddons, sir, and the O'Nale—They were great, but what were they compared to Miss Fotheringay? I do not wish she should ashume her own name while on the stage. Me family, sir, are proud people; and the Costigans of Costiganstown think that an honest man, who has borne Her Majesty's colours in the Hundtherd and Third, would demean himself, by permitting his daughter to earn her old father's bread."

"There cannot be a more honourable duty, surely," Pen said.

"Honourable! Bedad, sir, I'd like to see the man who said Jack Costigan would consent to anything dishonourable. I have a heart, sir, though I am poor; I like a man who has a heart. You have: I read it in your honest face and steady eye. And would you believe it," he added, after a pause, and with a pathetic whisper, "that that Bingley, who has made his fortune by me child, gives her but two guineas a week: out of which she finds herself in dresses, and which, added to me own small means, makes our all?"

Now the Captain's means were so small as to be, it may be said, quite invisible. But nobody knows how the wind is tempered to shorn Irish lambs, and in what marvellous places they find pasture. If Captain Costigan, whom I had the honour to know, would but have told his history, it would have been a great moral story. But he neither would have told it if he could, nor could if he would; for the Captain was not only unaccustomed to tell the truth,—he was unable even to think it—and fact and fiction reeled together in his muzzy, whiskified brain.

He began life rather brilliantly with a pair of colours, a fine person

and legs, and one of the most beautiful voices in the world. To his latest day he sang, with admirable pathos and humour, those wonderful Irish ballads which are so mirthful and so melancholy: and was always the first himself to cry at their pathos. Poor Cos! he was at once brave and maudlin, humorous and an idiot; always good-natured, and sometimes almost trustworthy. Up to the last day of his life he would drink with any man, and back any man's bill: and his end was in a spunging-house, where the sheriff's officer, who took him, was fond of him.

In his brief morning of life, Cos formed the delight of regimental messes, and had the honour of singing his songs, bacchanalian and sentimental, at the tables of the most illustrious generals and commanders-in-chief, in the course of which period he drank three times as much claret as was good for him, and spent his doubtful patrimony. What became of him subsequently to his retirement from the army, is no affair of ours. I take it, no foreigner understands the life of an Irish gentleman without money, the way in which he manages to keep afloat—the wind-raising conspiracies in which he engages with heroes as unfortunate as himself—the means by which he contrives, during most days of the week, to get his portion of whisky-and-water: all these are mysteries to us inconceivable: but suffice it to say, that through all the storms of life Jack had floated somehow, and the lamp of his nose had never gone out.

Before he and Pen had had a half hour's conversation, the Captain managed to extract a couple of sovereigns from the young gentleman for tickets for his daughter's benefit, which was to take place speedily; and was not a *bonâ fide* transaction such as that of the last year, when poor Miss Fotheringay had lost fifteen shillings by her venture; but was an arrangement with the manager, by which the lady was to have the sale of a certain number of tickets, keeping for herself a large portion of the sum for which they were sold.

Pen had but two pounds in his purse, and he handed them over to the Captain for the tickets; he would have been afraid to offer more lest he should offend the latter's delicacy. Costigan scrawled him an order for a box, lightly slipped the sovereigns into his waistcoat, and slapped his hand over the place where they lay. They seemed to warm his old sides.

"Faith, sir," said he, "the bullion's scarcer with me than it used to be, as is the case with many a good fellow. I won six hundtherd of 'em in a single night, sir, when me kind friend, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, was in Gibralther."

Then it was good to see the Captain's behaviour at breakfast, before the devilled turkey and the mutton chops! His stories poured forth unceasingly, and his spirits rose as he chatted to the young men. When he got a bit of sunshine, the old lazzarone basked in it; he prated about his own affairs and past splendour, and all the lords, generals, and Lord-Lieutenants he had ever known. He described the death of his darling Bessie, the late Mrs. Costigan, and the challenge he had sent to Captain Shanty Clancy, of the Slashers, for looking rude at Miss Fotheringay as she was on her kyar in the Phaynix; and then he described how the Captain apologised, gave a dinner at the Kildare Street, where six of them drank twinty-one bottles of claret, &c. He announced that to sit with two such noble and generous young fellows was the happiness and pride of an old soldier's existence; and having had a second glass of Curaçoa, was so happy that he began to cry. Altogether we should say that the Captain was not a man of much strength of mind, or a very eligible companion for youth; but there are worse men, holding much better places in life, and more dishonest, who have never committed half so many rogueries as he. They walked out, the Captain holding an arm of each of his dear young friends, and in a maudlin state of contentment. He winked at one or two tradesmen's shops where, possibly, he owed a bill, as much as to say "See the company I'm in—sure I'll pay you, my boy,"—and they parted finally with Mr. Foker at a billiard-room, where the latter had a particular engagement with some gentlemen of Colonel Swallowtail's regiment.

Pen and the shabby Captain still walked the street together; the Captain, in his sly way, making inquiries about Mr. Foker's fortune and station in life. Pen told him how Foker's father was a celebrated brewer, and his mother was Lady Agnes Milton, Lord Rosherville's daughter. The Captain broke out into a strain of exaggerated compliment and panegyric about Mr. Foker, whose "native aristocracie," he said, "could be seen with the twinkling of an oi—and only served to adawrun other qualities which he possessed, a foin intellect and a generous heart."

Pen walked on, listening to his companion's prate, wondering, amused, and puzzled. It had not as yet entered into the boy's head to disbelieve any statement that was made to him; and being of a candid nature himself, he took naturally for truth what other people told him. Costigan had never had a better listener, and was highly flattered by the attentiveness and modest bearing of the young man.

So much pleased was he with the young gentleman, so artless,

honest, and cheerful did Pen seem to be, that the Captain finally made him an invitation, which he very seldom accorded to young men, and asked Pen if he would do him the fevor to enter his humble abode, which was near at hand, where the Captain would have the honour of inthrojuicing his young friend to his daughther, Miss Fotheringay?

Pen was so delightfully shocked at this invitation, that he thought he should have dropped from the Captain's arm at first, and trembled lest the other should discover his emotion. He gasped out a few incoherent words, indicative of the high gratification he should have in being presented to the lady for whose—for whose talents he had conceived such an admiration—such an extreme admiration; and followed the Captain, scarcely knowing whither that gentleman led him. He was going to see her! He was going to see her! In her was the centre of the universe. She was the kernel of the world for Pen. Yesterday, before he knew her, seemed a period ever so long ago—a revolution was between him and that time, and a new world about to begin.

The Captain conducted his young friend to that quiet little street in Chatteris, called Prior's Lane, which lies close by Dean's Green and the canons' houses, and is overlooked by the enormous towers of the cathedral; there the Captain dwelt modestly in the first floor of a low gabled house, on the door of which was the brass plate of "Creed, Tailor and Robe-maker." Creed was dead, however. His widow was a pew-opener in the cathedral hard by; his eldest son was a little scamp of a choir-boy, who played toss-halfpenny, led his little brothers into mischief, and had a voice as sweet as an angel. A couple of the latter were sitting on the door-step, and they jumped up with great alacrity to meet their lodger, and plunged wildly, and rather to Pen's surprise, at the swallow-tails of the Captain's dress-coat; for the truth is, that the good-natured gentleman, when he was in cash, generally brought home an apple, or a piece of ginger-bread, for these children. "Whereby the widdy never pressed me for rint when not convanient," as he remarked afterwards to Pen, winking knowingly, and laying a finger on his nose.

As Pen followed his companion up the creaking old stair, his knees trembled under him. He could hardly see when he entered, following the Captain, and stood in the room—in her room. He saw something black before him, and waving as if making a curtsey, and heard, but quite indistinctly, Costigan making a speech over him, in which the Captain, with his usual magniloquence, expressed to "me child"

his wish to make her known to "his dear and admirable young friend, Mr. Awther Pindinnis, a young gentleman of property in the neighbourhood, a person of refoined moind, and emiable manners, a sinsare lover of poethry and a man possest of a feeling and affectionate heart."

"It is very fine weather," Miss Fotheringay said, in an Irish accent, and with a deep rich melancholy voice.

"Very," said Mr. Pendennis. In this romantic way their conversation began; and he found himself seated on a chair, and having leisure to look at the young lady.

She looked still handsomer off the stage than before the lamps. All her attitudes were naturally grand and majestical. If she went and stood up against the mantel-piece her robe draped itself classically round her; her chin supported itself on her hand, the other lines of her form arranged themselves in full harmonious undulations—she looked like a muse in contemplation. If she sate down on a cane-bottomed chair, her arm rounded itself over the back of the seat, her hand seemed as if it ought to have a sceptre put into it, the folds of her dress fell naturally round her in order: all her movements were graceful and imperial. In the morning you could see her hair was blue-black, her complexion of dazzling fairness, with the faintest possible blush flickering, as it were, in her cheek. Her eyes were gray, with prodigious long lashes; and as for her mouth, Mr. Pendennis has given me subsequently to understand, that it was of a staring red colour, with which the most brilliant geranium, sealing-wax, or Guards-man's coat, could not vie.

"And very warm," continued this empress and Queen of Sheba.

Mr. Pen again assented, and the conversation rolled on in this manner. She asked Costigan whether he had had a pleasant evening at the George, and he recounted the supper and the tumblers of punch. Then the father asked her how she had been employing the morning.

"Bows came," said she, "at ten, and we studied Ophalia. It's for the twenty-fourth, when I hope, sir, we shall have the honour of seeing ye."

"Indeed, indeed, you will," Mr. Pendennis cried; wondering that she could say "Ophalia," and speak with an Irish inflection of voice naturally, who had not the least Hibernian accent on the stage.

"I've secured 'um for your benefit, dear," said the Captain, tapping his waistcoat pocket, wherein lay Pen's sovereigns, and winking at Pen, with one eye, at which the boy blushed.

"Mr. —— the gentleman's very obleeging," said Mrs. Haller.

"My name is Pendennis," said Pen, blushing. "I—I—hope you'll —you'll remember it." His heart thumped so as he made this audacious declaration, that he almost choked in uttering it.

"Pendennis"—she answered slowly, and looking him full in the eyes, with a glance so straight, so clear, so bright, so killing, with a voice so sweet, so round, so low, that the word and the glance shot Pen through and through, and perfectly transfixed him with pleasure.

"I never knew the name was so pretty before," Pen said.

"'Tis a very pretty name," Ophelia said. "Pentweazle's not a pretty name. Remember, papa, when we were on the Norwich Circuit, Young Pentweazle, who used to play second old men, and married Miss Rancy, the Columbine; they're both engaged in London now, at the Queen's, and get five pounds a week. Pentweazle wasn't his real name. 'Twas Judkin gave it him, I don't know why. His name was Harrington; that is, his real name was Potts; fawther a clergyman, very respectable. Harrington was in London, and got in debt. Ye remember, he came out in Falkland, to Mrs. Bunce's Julia."

"And a pretty Julia she was," the Captain interposed; "a woman of fifty, and a mother of ten children. 'Tis you who ought to have been Julia, or my name's not Jack Costigan."

"I didn't take the leading business then," Miss Fotheringay said modestly; "I wasn't fit for't till Bows taught me."

"True for you, my dear," said the Captain: and bending to Pendennis, he added, "Rejuiced in circumstances, sir, I was for some time a fencing-master in Dublin; (there's only three men in the empire could touch me with the foil once, but Jack Costigan's getting old and stiff now, sir,) and my daughter had an engagement at the thayater there; and 'twas there that my friend, Mr. Bows, gave her lessons, and made her what ye see. What have ye done since Bows went, Emily?"

"Sure, I've made a pie," Emily said, with perfect simplicity. She pronounced it "Poy."

"If ye'll try it at four o'clock, sir, say the word," said Costigan gallantly. "That girl, sir, makes the best veal and ham pie in England, and I think I can promise ye a glass of punch of the right flavour."

Pen had promised to be home to dinner at six o'clock, but the rascal thought he could accommodate pleasure and duty in this point, and was only too eager to accept this invitation. He looked on with

delight and wonder whilst Ophelia busied herself about the room, and prepared for the dinner. She arranged the glasses, and laid and smoothed the little cloth, all which duties she performed with a quiet grace and good humour, which enchanted her guest more and more. The "poy" arrived from the baker's in the hands of one of the little choir-boy's brothers at the proper hour: and at four o'clock, Pen found himself at dinner—actually at dinner with the handsomest woman in all creation—with his first and only love, whom he had adored ever since when?—ever since yesterday, ever since for ever. He ate a crust of her making, he poured her out a glass of beer, he saw her drink a glass of punch—just one wine-glass full—out of the tumbler which she mixed for her papa. She was perfectly good-natured, and offered to mix one for Pendennis too. It was prodigiously strong; Pen had never in his life drunk so much spirits and water. Was it the punch, or the punch-maker who intoxicated him?

Pen tried to engage her in conversation about poetry and about her profession. He asked her what she thought of Ophelia's madness, and whether she was in love with Hamlet or not? "In love with such a little ojus wretch as that stunted manager of a Bingley?" She bristled with indignation at the thought. Pen explained it was not of her he spoke, but of Ophelia of the play. "Oh, indeed; if no offence was meant, none was taken: but as for Bingley, indeed, she did not value him—not that glass of punch." Pen next tried her on Kotzebue. "Kotzebue? who was he?"—"The author of the play in which she had been performing so admirably." "She did not know that—the man's name at the beginning of the book was Thompson," she said. Pen laughed at her adorable simplicity. He told her of the melancholy fate of the author of the play, and how Sand had killed him. It was the first time in her life that Miss Costigan had ever heard of Mr. Kotzebue's existence, but she looked as if she was very much interested, and her sympathy sufficed for honest Pen.

And in the midst of this simple conversation, the hour and a quarter which poor Pen could afford to allow himself passed away only too quickly; and he had taken leave, he was gone, and away on his rapid road homewards on the back of Rebecca. She was called upon to show her mettle in the three journeys which she made that day.

"What was that he was talking about, the madness of Hamlet, and the theory of the great German critic on the subject?" Emily asked of her father.

"'Deed then I don't know, Milly dear," answered the Captain. "We'll ask Bows when he comes."

"Anyhow, he's a nice, fair-spoken pretty young man," the lady said: "how many tickets did he take of you?"

"'Faith, then, he took six, and gev me two guineas, Milly," the Captain said. "I suppose them young chaps is not too flush of coin."

"He's full of book-learning," Miss Fotheringay continued. "Kotzebue! He, he, what a droll name indeed, now; and the poor fellow killed by Sand, too! Did ye ever hear such a thing? I'll ask Bows about it, papa dear."

"A queer death, sure enough," ejaculated the Captain, and changed the painful theme. "'Tis an elegant mare the young gentleman rides,"

Costigan went on to say; "and a grand breakfast, intirely, that young Mister Foker gave us."

"He's *good for two* private boxes, and at leest twenty tickets, I

should say," cried the daughter, a prudent lass, who always kept her fine eyes on the main chance.

"I'll go bail of that," answered the papa; and so their conversation continued awhile, until the tumbler of punch was finished; and their hour of departure soon came, too; for at half-past six Miss Fotheringay was to appear at the theatre again, whither her father always accompanied her; and stood, as we have seen, in the side-scene watching her, and drank spirits-and-water in the green-room with the company there.

"How beautiful she is!" thought Pen, cantering homewards. "How simple and how tender! How charming it is to see a woman of her genius busying herself with the humble offices of domestic life, cooking dishes to make her old father comfortable, and brewing him drink! How rude it was of me to begin to talk about professional matters, and how well she turned the conversation! By the way, she talked about professional matters herself; but then with what fun and humour she told the story of her comrade, Pentweazle, as he was called! There is no humour like Irish humour. Her father is rather tedious, but thoroughly amiable; and how fine of him, giving lessons in fencing after he quitted the army, where he was the pet of the Duke of Kent! Fencing! I should like to continue my fencing, or I shall forget what Angelo taught me. Uncle Arthur always liked me to fence—he says it is the exercise of a gentleman. Hang it! I'll take some lessons of Captain Costigan. Go along, Rebecca—up the hill, old lady. Pendennis, Pendennis—how she spoke the word! Emily, Emily! how good, how noble, how beautiful, how perfect, she is!"

Now the reader, who has had the benefit of overhearing the entire conversation which Pen had with Miss Fotheringay, can judge for himself about the powers of her mind, and may perhaps be disposed to think that she has not said anything astonishingly humorous or intellectual in the course of the above interview.

But what did our Pen care? He saw a pair of bright eyes, and he believed in them—a beautiful image, and he fell down and worshipped it. He supplied the meaning which her words wanted; and created the divinity which he loved. Was Titania the first who fell in love with an ass, or Pygmalion the only artist who has gone crazy about a stone? He had found her; he had found what his soul thirsted after. He flung himself into the stream and drank with all his might. Let those who have been thirsty own how delicious that first draught is. As he rode down the avenue towards home—Pen shrieked with laughter as he saw the Reverend Mr. Smirke once more coming demurely

away from Fairoaks on his pony. Smirke had dawdled and stayed at the cottages on the way, and then dawdled with Laura over her lessons —and then looked at Mrs. Pendennis's gardens and improvements until he had perfectly bored out that lady: and he had taken his leave at the very last minute without that invitation to dinner which he fondly expected.

Pen was full of kindness and triumph. "What, picked up and sound?" he cried out laughing. "Come along back, old fellow, and eat my dinner—I have had mine: but we will have a bottle of the old wine and drink her health, Smirke."

Poor Smirke turned the pony's head round, and jogged along with Arthur. His mother was charmed to see him in such high spirits, and welcomed Mr. Smirke for his sake, when Arthur said he had forced the curate back to dine. He gave a most ludicrous account of the play of the night before, and of the acting of Bingley the Manager in his rickety Hessians, and the enormous Mrs. Bingley as the Countess, in rumpled green satin and a Polish cap: he mimicked them, and delighted his mother and little Laura, who clapped her hands with pleasure.

"And Mrs. Haller?" said Mrs. Pendennis.

"She's a stunner, ma'am," Pen said, laughing, and using the words of his revered friend, Mr Foker.

"A *what*, Arthur?" asked the lady.

'What is a stunner, Arthur?" cried Laura, in the same voice.

So he gave them a queer account of Mr. Foker, and how he used to be called Vats and Grains, and by other contumelious names at school: and how he was now exceedingly rich, and a Fellow Commoner at St. Boniface. But gay and communicative as he was, Mr. Pen did not say one syllable about his ride to Chatteris that day, or about the new friends whom he had made there.

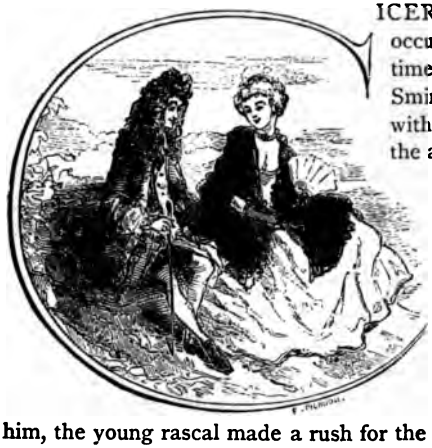
When the two ladies retired, Pen, with flashing eyes, filled up two great bumpers of Madeira, and looking Smirke full in the face said, "Here's to her!"

"Here's to her!" said the curate with a sigh, lifting the glass: and emptying it, so that his face was a little pink when he put it down.

Pen had even less sleep that night than on the night before. In the morning, and almost before dawn, he went out and saddled that unfortunate Rebecca himself, and rode her on the Downs like mad. Again Love had roused him—and said, "Awake Pendennis, I am here." That charming fever—that delicious longing—and fire, and uncertainty; he hugged them to him—he would not have lost them *for all the world.*

CHAPTER VI.

CONTAINS BOTH LOVE AND WAR.



CICERO and Euripides did not occupy Mr. Pen much for some time after this, and honest Mr. Smirke had a very easy time with his pupil. Rebecca was the animal who suffered most in the present state of Pen's mind, for, besides those days when he could publicly announce his intention of going to Chatteris to take a fencing-lesson, and went thither with the knowledge of his mother, whenever he saw three hours clear before him, the young rascal made a rush for the city, and found his way to Prior's Lane. He was as frantic with vexation when Rebecca went lame, as Richard at Bosworth, when his horse was killed under him: and got deeply into the books of the man who kept the hunting stables at Chatteris for the doctoring of his own, and the hire of another animal.

Then, and perhaps once in a week, under pretence of going to read a Greek play with Smirke, this young reprobate set off so as to be in time for the Competitor down coach, stayed a couple of hours in Chatteris, and returned on the Rival, which left for London at ten at night. Once his secret was nearly lost by Smirke's simplicity, of whom Mrs. Pendennis asked whether they had read a great deal the night before, or a question to that effect. Smirke was about to tell the truth, that he had never seen Mr. Pen at all, when the latter's boot-heel came grinding down on Mr. Smirke's toe under the table, and warned the curate not to betray him.

They had had conversations on the tender subject of course.

There must be a confidant and depositary somewhere. When informed, under the most solemn vows of secrecy, of Pen's condition of mind, the curate said, with no small tremor, "that he hoped it was no unworthy object—no unlawful attachment, which Pen had formed"—for if so, the poor fellow felt it would be his duty to break his vow and inform Pen's mother, and then there would be a quarrel, he felt, with sickening apprehension, and he would never again have a chance of seeing what he most liked in the world.

"Unlawful, unworthy!" Pen bounced out at the curate's question. "She is as pure as she is beautiful; I would give my heart to no other woman. I keep the matter a secret in my family, because—because—there are reasons of a weighty nature which I am not at liberty to disclose. But any man who breathes a word against her purity insults both her honour and mine, and—and dammy, I won't stand it."

Smirke, with a faint laugh, only said, "Well, well, don't call me out, Arthur, for you know I can't fight:" but by this compromise the wretched curate was put more than ever into the power of his pupil, and the Greek and mathematics suffered correspondingly.

If the reverend gentleman had had much discernment, and looked into the Poets' corner of the County Chronicle, as it arrived in the Wednesday's bag, he might have seen "Mrs. Haller," "Passion and Genius," "Lines to Miss Fotheringay, of the Theatre Royal," appearing every week; and other verses of the most gloomy, thrilling, and passionate cast. But as these poems were no longer signed NEP by their artful composer, but subscribed EROS; neither the tutor nor Helen, the good soul, who cut all her son's verses out of the paper, knew that Nep was no other than that flaming Eros, who sang so vehemently the charms of the new actress.

"Who is the lady," at last asked Mrs. Pendennis, "whom your rival is always singing in the County Chronicle. He writes something like you, dear Pen, but yours is much the best. Have you seen Miss Fotheringay?"

Pen said yes, he had; that night he went to see the "Stranger," she acted Mrs. Haller. By the way, she was going to have a benefit, and was to appear in Ophelia—suppose we were to go—Shakspeare you know, mother—we can get horses from the Clavering Arms. Little Laura sprang up with delight, she longed for a play.

Pen introduced "Shakspeare you know," because the deceased Pendennis, as became a man of his character, professed an uncommon respect for the bard of Avon, in whose works he safely said there was more poetry than in all "Johnson's Poets" put together. And though

Mr. Pendennis did not much read the works in question, yet he enjoined Pen to peruse them, and often said what pleasure he should have, when the boy was of a proper age, in taking him and mother to see some good plays of the immortal poet.

The ready tears welled up in the kind mother's eyes as she remembered these speeches of the man who was gone. She kissed her son fondly, and said she would go. Laura jumped for joy. Was Pen happy?—was he ashamed? As he held his mother to him, he longed to tell her all, but he kept his counsel. He would see how his mother liked her; the play should be the thing, and he would try his mother like Hamlet's.

Helen, in her good humour, asked Mr. Smirke to be of the party. That ecclesiastic had been bred up by a fond parent at Clapham, who had an objection to dramatic entertainments, and he had never yet seen a play. But, Shakspeare!—but to go with Mrs. Pendennis in her carriage, and sit a whole night by her side!—he could not resist the idea of so much pleasure, and made a feeble speech, in which he spoke of temptation and gratitude, and finally accepted Mrs. Pendennis's most kind offer. As he spoke he gave her a look, which made her exceedingly uncomfortable. She had seen that look more than once, of late, pursuing her. He became more positively odious every day in the widow's eyes.

We are not going to say a great deal about Pen's courtship of Miss Fotheringay, for the reader has already had a specimen of her conversation, much of which need surely not be reported. Pen sate with her hour after hour, and poured forth all his honest boyish soul to her. Everything he knew, or hoped, or felt, or had read, or fancied, he told to her. He never tired of talking and longing. One after another, as his thoughts rose in his hot eager brain, he clothed them in words, and told them to her. Her part of the *tête à tête* was not to talk, but to appear as if she understood what Pen talked, and to look exceedingly handsome and sympathising. The fact is, whilst he was making one of his tirades, the lovely Emily, who could not comprehend a tenth part of his talk, had leisure to think about her own affairs, and would arrange in her own mind how they should dress the cold mutton, or how she would turn the black satin, or make herself out of her scarf a bonnet like Miss Thackthwaite's new one, and so forth. Pen spouted Byron and Moore; passion and poetry: her business was to throw up her eyes, or fixing them for a moment on his face, to cry, "Oh, 'tis beautiful! Ah, how exquisite! Repeat those lines again." And off the boy went,

and she returned to her own simple thoughts about the turned gown, or the hashed mutton.

In fact Pen's passion was not long a secret from the lovely Emily or her father. Upon his second visit, his admiration was quite evident to both of them, and on his departure the old gentleman said to his daughter, as he winked at her over his glass of grog, "Faith, Milly darling, I think ye've hooked that chap."

"Pooh, 'tis only a boy, papa dear," Milly remarked. "Sure he's but a child."

"Ye've hooked 'um any how," said the Captain, "and let me tell ye he's not a bad fish. I asked Tom at the George, and Flint, the grocer, where his mother dales—fine fortune—drives in her chariot—splendid park and grounds—Fairoaks Park—only son—property all his own at twenty-one—ye might go further and not fare so well, Miss Fotheringay."

"Them boys are mostly talk," said Milly, seriously. "Ye know at Dublin how ye went on about young Poldoody, and I've a whole desk full of verses he wrote me when he was in Trinity College; but he went abroad, and his mother married him to an Englishwoman."

"Lord Poldoody was a young nobleman; and in them it's natural: and ye weren't in the position in which ye are now, Milly dear. But ye mustn't encourage this young chap too much, for, bedad, Jack Costigan won't have any thrifling with his daughter."

"No more will his daughter, papa, you may be sure of *that*," Milly said. "A little sip more of the punch,—sure, 'tis beautiful. Ye needn't be afraid about the young chap—I think I'm old enough to take care of myself, Captain Costigan."

So Pen used to come day after day, rushing in and galloping away, and growing more wild about the girl with every visit. Sometimes the Captain was present at their meetings; but having a perfect confidence in his daughter, he was more often inclined to leave the young couple to themselves, and cocked his hat over his eye, and strutted off on some errand when Pen entered. How delightful those interviews were! The Captain's drawing-room was a low wainscoted room, with a large window looking into the Dean's garden. There Pen sate and talked—and talked to Emily, looking beautiful as she sate at her work looking beautiful and calm, and the sunshine came streaming in at the great windows, and lighted up her superb face and form. In the midst of the conversation, the great bell would begin to boom, and he would pause smiling, and be silent until the sound of the vast music died away—or the rooks in the cathedral elms would make a great

noise towards sunset—or the sound of the organ and the choristers would come over the quiet air, and gently hush Pen's talking.

By the way, it must be said that Miss Fotheringay, in a plain shawl and a close bonnet and veil, went to church every Sunday of her life, accompanied by her indefatigable father, who gave the responses in a very rich and fine brogue, joined in the psalms and chanting, and behaved in the most exemplary manner.

Little Bows, the house-friend of the family, was exceedingly wroth at the notion of Miss Fotheringay's marriage with a stripling seven or eight years her junior. Bows, who was a cripple, and owned that he was a little more deformed even than Bingley the manager, so that he could not appear on the stage, was a singular wild man of no small talents and humour. Attracted first by Miss Fotheringay's beauty, he began to teach her how to act. He shrieked out in his cracked voice the parts, and his pupil learned them from his lips by rote, and repeated them in her full rich tones. He indicated the attitudes, and set and moved those beautiful arms of hers. Those who remember this grand actress on the stage can recall how she used always precisely the same gestures, looks, and tones; how she stood on the same plank of the stage in the same position, rolled her eyes at the same instant and to the same degree, and wept with precisely the same heart-rending pathos and over the same pathetic syllable. And after she had come out trembling with emotion before the audience, and looking so exhausted and tearful that you fancied she would faint with sensibility, she would gather up her hair the instant she was behind the curtain, and go home to a mutton chop and a glass of brown stout; and the harrowing labours of the day over, she went to bed and snored as resolutely and as regularly as a porter.

Bows then was indignant at the notion that his pupil should throw her chances away in life by bestowing her hand upon a little country squire. As soon as a London manager saw her he prophesied that she would get a London engagement, and a great success. The misfortune was that the London managers had seen her. She had played in London three years before, and had failed from utter stupidity. Since then it was that Bows had taken her in hand and taught her part after part. How he worked and screamed, and twisted, and repeated lines over and over again, and with what indomitable patience and dullness she followed him! She knew that he made her: and let herself be made. She was not grateful, or ungrateful, or unkind, or ill-humoured. She was only stupid; and Pen was madly in love with her.

The post-horses from the Clavering Arms arrived in due time, and carried the party to the theatre at Chatteris, where Pen was gratified in perceiving that a tolerably large audience was assembled. The young gentlemen from Baymouth had a box, in the front of which sate Mr. Foker and his friend Mr. Spavin splendidly attired in the most full-blown evening costume. They saluted Pen in a cordial manner, and examined his party, of which they approved, for little Laura was a pretty little red-cheeked girl with a quantity of shining brown ringlets, and Mrs. Pendennis dressed in black velvet with the diamond cross which she sported on great occasions, looked uncommonly handsome and majestic. Behind these sate Mr. Arthur, and the gentle Smirke with the curl reposing on his fair forehead, and his white tie in perfect order. He blushed to find himself in such a place—but how happy was he to be there! He and Mrs. Pendennis brought books of "Hamlet" with them to follow the tragedy, as is the custom of honest country-folks who go to a play in state. Samuel, coachman, groom, and gardener to Mrs. Pendennis, took his place in the pit, where Mr. Foker's man was also visible. It was dotted with non-commissioned officers of the Dragoons, whose band, by kind permission of Colonel Swallowtail, were, as usual, in the orchestra; and that corpulent and distinguished warrior himself, with his Waterloo medal and a number of his young men, made a handsome show in the boxes.

"Who is that odd-looking person bowing to you, Arthur?" Mrs. Pendennis asked of her son.

Pen blushed a great deal. "His name is Captain Costigan, ma'am," he said—"a Peninsular officer." In fact it was the Captain in a new shoot of clothes, as he called them, and with a large pair of white kid gloves, one of which he waved to Pendennis, whilst he laid the other sprawling over his heart and coat-buttons. Pen did not say any more. And how was Mrs. Pendennis to know that Mr. Costigan was the father of Miss Fotheringay?

Mr. Hornbull, from London, was the Hamlet of the night, Mr. Bingley modestly contenting himself with the part of Horatio, and reserving his chief strength for William in "Black-Eyed Susan," which was the second piece.

We have nothing to do with the play: except to say, that Ophelia looked lovely, and performed with admirable wild pathos: laughing, weeping, gazing wildly, waving her beautiful white arms, and flinging about her snatches of flowers and songs with the most charming madness. What an opportunity her splendid black hair had of

tossing over her shoulders! She made the most charming corpse ever seen; and while Hamlet and Laertes were battling in her grave, she was looking out from the back scenes with some curiosity towards Pen's box, and the family party assembled in it.

There was but one voice in her praise there. Mrs. Pendennis was in ecstacies with her beauty. Little Laura was bewildered by the piece, and the Ghost, and the play within the play (during which, as Hamlet lay at Ophelia's knee, Pen felt that he would have liked to

strangle Mr. Hornbull), but cried out great praises of that beautiful young creature. Pen was charmed with the effect which she produced on his mother—and the clergyman, for his part, was exceedingly enthusiastic.

When the curtain fell upon that group of slaughtered personages, who are dispatched so suddenly at the end of "Hamlet," and whose demise astonished poor little Laura not a little, there was an immense shouting and applause from all quarters of the house; the intrepid Smirke, violently excited, clapped his hands, and cried out "Bravo, Bravo!" as loud as the Dragoon officers themselves. These were

greatly moved,—*ils s'agitaient sur leurs bancs*,—to borrow a phrase from our neighbours. They were led cheering into action by the portly Swallowtail, who waved his cap—the non-commissioned officers in the pit, of course, gallantly following their chiefs. There was a roar of bravos rang through the house; Pen bellowing with the loudest, "Fotheringay! Fotheringay!" Messrs. Spavin and Foker giving the view halloo from their box. Even Mrs. Pendennis began to wave about her pocket-handkerchief, and little Laura danced, laughed, clapped, and looked up at Pen with wonder.

Hornbull led the *bénéficiaire* forward, amidst bursts of enthusiasm —and she looked so handsome and radiant, with her hair still over her shoulders, that Pen hardly could contain himself for rapture: and he leaned over his mother's chair, and shouted, and hurrayed, and waved his hat. It was all he could do to keep his secret from Helen and not say, "Look! That's the woman! Isn't she peerless? I tell you I love her." But he disguised these feelings under an enormous bellowing and hurraying.

As for Miss Fotheringay and her behaviour, the reader is referred to a former page for an account of that. She went through precisely the same business. She surveyed the house all round with glances of gratitude; and trembled, and almost sank with emotion, over her favourite trap-door. She seized the flowers (Foker discharged a prodigious bouquet at her, and even Smirke made a feeble shy with a rose, and blushed dreadfully when it fell into the pit)—she seized the flowers and pressed them to her swelling heart—&c. &c.—in a word —we refer the reader to page 40. Twinkling in her breast poor old Pen saw a locket which he had bought of Mr. Nathan in High Street with the last shilling he was worth, and a sovereign borrowed from Smirke.

"Black-Eyed Susan" followed, at which sweet story our gentle-hearted friends were exceedingly charmed and affected: and in which Susan, with a russet gown and a pink ribbon in her cap, looked to the full as lovely as Ophelia. Bingley was great in William. Goll, as the Admiral, looked like the figure-head of a seventy-four; and Garbetts, as Captain Boldweather, a miscreant who forms a plan for carrying off Black-Eyed Susan, and waving an immense cocked hat, says, "Come what may, he *will* be the ruin of her"—all these performed their parts with their accustomed talent; and it was with a sincere regret that all our friends saw the curtain drop down and end that pretty and tender story.

If Pen had been alone with his mother in the carriage as they

went home, he would have told her all that night; but he sate on the box in the moonshine smoking a cigar by the side of Smirke, who warmed himself with a comforter. Mr. Foker's tandem and lamps whirled by the sober old Clavering posters, as they were a couple of miles on their road home, and Mr. Spavin saluted Mrs. Pendennis's carriage with some considerable variations of Rule Britannia on the key-bugle.

It happened two days after the above gaieties that the Dean of Chatteris entertained a few select clerical friends at dinner at his Deanery House. That they drank uncommonly good port wine, and abused the Bishop over their dessert, are very likely matters: but with such we have nothing at present to do. Our friend Doctor Portman, of Clavering, was one of the Dean's guests, and being a gallant man, and seeing, from his place at the mahogany, the Dean's lady walking up and down the grass, with her children sporting around her, and her pink parasol over her lovely head—the Doctor stept out of the French windows of the dining-room into the lawn, which skirts that apartment, and left the other white neck-cloths to gird at my Lord Bishop. Then the Doctor went up and offered Mrs. Dean his arm, and they sauntered over the ancient velvet lawn, which had been mowed and rolled for immemorial Deans, in that easy, quiet, comfortable manner, in which people of middle age and good temper walk after a good dinner, in a calm golden summer evening, when the sun has but just sunk behind the enormous cathedral towers, and the sickle-shaped moon is growing every instant brighter in the heavens.

Now at the end of the Dean's garden, there is, as we have stated, Mrs. Creed's house, and the windows of the first-floor room were open to admit the pleasant summer air. A young lady of six-and-twenty, whose eyes were perfectly wide open, and a luckless boy of eighteen, blind with love and infatuation, were in that chamber together; in which persons, as we have before seen them in the same place, the reader will have no difficulty in recognising Mr. Arthur Pendennis and Miss Costigan.

The poor boy had taken the plunge. Trembling with passionate emotion, his heart beating and throbbing fiercely, tears rushing forth in spite of him, his voice almost choking with feeling, poor Pen had said those words which he could withhold no more, and flung himself and his whole store of love, and admiration, and ardour, at the feet of this mature beauty. Is he the first who has done so? Have none

before or after him staked all their treasure of life, as a savage does his land and possessions against a draught of the fair-skins' fire-water, or a couple of bauble eyes?

"Does your mother know of this, *Arthur?*" said Miss Fotheringay, slowly. He seized her hand madly and kissed it a thousand times. She did not withdraw it. "*Does* the old lady know it?" Miss Costigan thought to herself "well, perhaps she may," and then she remembered what a handsome diamond cross Mrs. Pendennis had on the night of the play, and thought, "sure 'twill go in the family."

"Calm yourself, dear Arthur," she said, in her low rich voice, and smiled sweetly and gravely upon him. Then with her disengaged hand, she put the hair lightly off his throbbing forehead. He was in such a rapture and whirl of happiness that he could hardly speak. At last he gasped out, "My mother has seen you and admires you beyond measure. She will learn to love you soon: who can do otherwise? She will love you because I do."

"'Deed then, I think you do," said Miss Costigan, perhaps with a sort of pity for Pen.

Think he did! Of course here Mr. Pen went off into a rhapsody which, as we have perfect command over our own feelings, we have no right to overhear. Let the poor boy fling out his simple heart at the woman's feet, and deal gently with him. It is best to love wisely, no doubt: but to love foolishly is better than not to be able to love at all. Some of us can't: and are proud of our impotence too.

At the end of his speech, Pen again kissed the imperial hand with rapture—and I believe it was at this very moment, and while Mrs. Dean and Doctor Portman were engaged in conversation, that young Master Ridley Roset, her son, pulled his mother by the back of her capacious dress and said—

"I say, ma! look up there"—and he waggled his innocent head.

That was, indeed, a view from the Dean's garden such as seldom is seen by Deans—or is written in Chapters. There was poor Pen performing a salute upon the rosy fingers of his charmer, who received the embrace with perfect calmness and good-humour. Master Ridley looked up and grinned, little Miss Rosa looked at her brother, and opened the mouth of astonishment. Mrs. Dean's countenance defied expression, and as for Dr. Portman, when he beheld the scene, and saw his prime favourite and dear pupil Pen, he stood mute with rage and wonder.

Mrs. Haller spied the party below at the same moment, and gave a start and a laugh. "Sure there's somebody in the Dean's garden;

she cried out; and withdrew with perfect calmness, whilst Pen darted away with his face glowing like coals. The garden party had re-entered the house when he ventured to look out again. The sickle moon was blazing bright in the heavens then, the stars were glittering, the bell of the cathedral tolling nine, the Dean's guests (all save one, who had called for his horse Dumpling, and ridden off early) were partaking of tea and buttered cakes in Mrs. Dean's drawing-room—when Pen took leave of Miss Costigan.

Pen arrived at home in due time afterwards, and was going to slip off to bed, for the poor lad was greatly worn and agitated, and his high-strung nerves had been at almost a maddening pitch—when a summons came to him by John the old footman, whose countenance bore a very ominous look, that his mother must see him below.

On this he tied on his neckcloth again, and went downstairs to the drawing-room. There sate not only his mother, but her friend, the Reverend Doctor Portman. Helen's face looked very pale by the light of the lamp—the Doctor's was flushed, on the contrary, and quivering with anger and emotion.

Pen saw at once that there was a crisis, and that there had been a discovery. "Now for it," he thought.

"Where have you been, Arthur?" Helen said in a trembling voice.

"How can you look that—that dear lady, and a Christian clergyman in the face, sir?" bounced out the Doctor, in spite of Helen's pale, appealing looks. "Where has he been? Where his mother's son should have been ashamed to go. For your mother's an angel, sir, an angel. How dare you bring pollution into her house, and make that spotless creature wretched with the thoughts of your crime?"

"Sir!" said Pen.

"Don't deny it, sir," roared the Doctor. "Don't add lies, sir, to your other infamy. I saw you myself, sir. I saw you from the Dean's garden. I saw you kissing the hand of that infernal painted"—

"Stop!" Pen said, clapping his fist on the table, till the lamp flickered up and shook; "I am a very young man, but you will please to remember that I am a gentleman—I will hear no abuse of that lady."

"Lady, sir!" cried the Doctor, "*that* a lady—you—you—you stand in your mother's presence and call that—that woman a lady!"—

"In anybody's presence," shouted out Pen. "She is worthy of any place. She is as pure as any woman. She is as good as she is

beautiful. If any man but you insulted her, I would tell him what I thought; but as you are my oldest friend, I suppose you have the privilege to doubt of my honour."

"No, no, Pen, dearest Pen!" cried out Helen in an excess of joy. "I told, I told you, Doctor, he was not—not what you thought:" and the tender creature coming trembling forward flung herself on Pen's shoulder.

Pen felt himself a man, and a match for all the Doctors in Doctordom. He was glad this explanation had come. "You saw how beautiful she was," he said to his mother, with a soothing, protecting air, like Hamlet with Gertrude in the play. "I tell you, dear mother, she is as good. When you know her you will say so. She is of all, except you, the simplest, the kindest, the most affectionate of women. Why should she not be on the stage?—She maintains her father by her labour."

"Drunken old reprobate," growled the Doctor, but Pen did not hear or heed.

"If you could see, as I have, how orderly her life is, how pure and pious her whole conduct, you would—as I do—yes, as I do"—(with a savage look at the Doctor)—"spurn the slanderer who dared to do her wrong. Her father was an officer, and distinguished himself in Spain. He was a friend of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, and is intimately known to the Duke of Wellington, and some of the first officers of our army. He has met my uncle Arthur at Lord Hill's, he thinks. His own family is one of the most ancient and respectable in Ireland, and indeed is as good as our own. The—the Costigans were kings of Ireland."

"Why, God bless my soul," shrieked out the Doctor, hardly knowing whether to burst with rage or laughter, "you don't mean to say you want to *marry* her?"

Pen put on his most princely air. "What else, Dr. Portman," he said, "do you suppose would be my desire?"

Utterly foiled in his attack, and knocked down by this sudden lunge of Pen's, the Doctor could only gasp out, "Mrs. Pendennis, ma'am, send for the Major."

"Send for the Major? with all my heart," said Arthur, Prince of Pendennis and Grand Duke of Fairoaks, with a most superb wave of the hand. And the colloquy terminated by the writing of those two letters which were laid on Major Pendennis's breakfast-table, in London, at the commencement of Prince Arthur's most veracious history.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH THE MAJOR MAKES HIS APPEARANCE.

UR acquaintance, Major Arthur Pendennis, arrived in due time at Fairoaks, after a dreary night passed in the mail-coach, where a stout fellow-passenger, swelling preternaturally with great-coats, had crowded him into a corner, and kept him awake by snoring indecently; where a widow lady, opposite, had not only shut out the fresh air by closing all the windows of the vehicle, but had filled the interior with fumes of Jamaica rum and water, which she sucked perpetually from a bottle in her reticule; where, whenever he caught a brief moment of sleep, the twanging of the horn at the turnpike gates, or the scuffling of his huge neighbour wedging him closer and closer, or the play of the widow's feet on his own tender toes, speedily woke up the poor gentleman to the horrors and realities of life—a life which has passed away now, and become impossible, and only lives in fond memories. Eight miles an hour, for twenty or five-and-twenty hours, a tight mail-coach, a hard seat, a gouty tendency, a perpetual change of coachmen grumbling because you did not fee them enough, a fellow-passenger partial to spirits-and-water,—who has not borne these evils in the jolly old times? and how could people travel under such difficulties? And yet they did. Night and morning passed, and the Major, with a yellow face, a bristly beard, a wig out of curl, and strong rheumatic griefs shooting through various limbs of his uneasy body, descended at the little lodge-gate at Fairoaks, where the porteress and gardener's wife reverentially greeted him: and, still more respectfully, Mr. Morgan, his man.

Helen was on the look-out for this expected guest, and saw from her window. But she did not come forward immediately to greet him. She knew the Major did not like to be seen at a surprise, and required a little preparation before he cared to be visible. Pen, when a boy, had incurred sad disgrace, by carrying off from the Major's dressing-table a little morocco box, which it must be confessed contained the Major's back teeth, which he naturally would leave out of his jaws in a jolting mail-coach, and without which he would not choose to appear. Morgan, his man, made a mystery of mystery of his wigs: curling them in private places: introducing them privily to his master's room;—nor without his head of hair would the Major care to show himself to any member of his family, or any acquaintance. He went to his apartment then and supplied these deficiencies; he groaned, and moaned, and wheezed and cursed Morgan through his toilet, as an old buck will, who has been up all night with a rheumatism, and has a long duty to perform. And finally being belted, curled, and set straight, he descended upon the drawing-room, with a grave majestic air such as befitted one who was at once a man of business and a man of fashion.

Pen was not there, however; only Helen, and little Laura sewing at her knees; and to whom he never presented more than a forefinger, as he did on this occasion after saluting his sister-in-law. Laura took the finger trembling and dropped it—and then fled out of the room. Major Pendennis did not want to keep her, or indeed to have her in the house at all, and had his private reason for disapproving of her; which we may mention on some future occasion. Meanwhile Laura disappeared, and wandered about the premises seeking for Pen: whom she presently found in the orchard, pacing up and down a walk there in earnest conversation with Mr. Smirke. He was so occupied that he did not hear Laura's clear voice singing out, until Smirke pulled him by the coat, and pointed towards her as she came running.

She ran up and put her hand into his. "Come in, Pen," she said, "there's somebody come; uncle Arthur's come."

"He is, is he?" said Pen, and she felt him grasp her little hand. He looked round at Smirke with uncommon fierceness, as much as to say, I am ready for him or any man—Mr. Smirke cast up his eyes as usual, and heaved a gentle sigh.

"Lead on, Laura," Pen said, with a half fierce, half comic air—"Lead on, and say I wait upon my uncle." But he was laughing in order to hide a great anxiety: and was screwing his courage inwardly to face the ordeal which he knew was now before him.

Pen had taken Smirke into his confidence in the last two days, and after the outbreak attendant on the discovery of Doctor Portman, and during every one of those forty-eight hours which he had passed in Mr. Smirke's society, had done nothing but talk to his tutor about Miss Fotheringay—Miss Emily Fotheringay—Emily, &c., to all which talk Smirke listened without difficulty, for he was in love himself, most anxious in all things to propitiate Pen, and indeed very much himself enraptured by the personal charms of this goddess, whose like, never having been before at a theatrical representation, he had not beheld until now. Pen's fire and volubility, his hot eloquence and rich poetical tropes and figures, his manly heart, kind, ardent, and hopeful, refusing to see any defects in the person he loved, any difficulties in their position that he might not overcome, had half convinced Mr. Smirke that the arrangement proposed by Mr. Pen was a very feasible and prudent one, and that it would be a great comfort to have Emily settled at Fairoaks, Captain Costigan in the yellow room, established for life there, and Pen married at eighteen.

And it is a fact that in these two days, the boy had almost talked over his mother, too; had parried all her objections one after another with that indignant good sense which is often the perfection of absurdity; and had brought her almost to acquiesce in the belief that if the marriage was doomed in heaven, why doomed it was—that if the young woman was a good person, it was all that she for her part had to ask; and rather to dread the arrival of the guardian uncle who she foresaw would regard Mr. Pen's marriage in a manner very different to that simple, romantic, honest, and utterly absurd way, in which the widow was already disposed to look at questions of this sort. Helen Pendennis was a country-bred woman, and the book of life, as she interpreted it, told her a different story to that page which is read in cities. It pleased her (with that dismal pleasure which the idea of sacrificing themselves gives to certain women), to think of the day when she would give up all to Pen, and he should bring his wife home, and she would surrender the keys and the best bed-room, and go and sit at the side of the table, and see him happy. What did she want in life, but to see the lad prosper? As an empress was certainly not too good for him, and would be honoured by becoming Mrs. Pen; so if he selected humble Esther instead of Queen Vashti, she would be content with his lordship's choice. Never mind how lowly or poor the person might be who was to enjoy that prodigious honour, Mrs. Pendennis was willing to bow before her and welcome her, and yield her up the first place. But an actress—a mature woman, who had long ceased blushing except

with rouge, as she stood under the eager glances of thousands of eyes—an illiterate and ill-bred person, very likely, who must have lived with light associates, and have heard doubtful conversation—Oh! it was hard that such a one should be chosen, and that the matron should be deposed to give place to such a Sultana.

All these doubts the widow laid before Pen during the two days which had of necessity to elapse ere the uncle came down; but he met them with that happy frankness and ease which a young gentleman exhibits at his time of life, and routed his mother's objections with infinite satisfaction to himself. Miss Costigan was a paragon of virtue and delicacy! she was as sensitive as the most timid maiden; she was as pure as the unsullied snow; she had the finest manners, the most graceful wit and genius, the most charming refinement, and justness of appreciation in all matters of taste; she had the most admirable temper and devotion to her father, a good old gentleman of high family and fallen fortunes, who had lived, however, with the best society in Europe: he was in no hurry, and could afford to wait any time—till he was one-and-twenty. But he felt (and here his face assumed an awful and harrowing solemnity) that he was engaged in the one only passion of his life, and that DEATH alone could close it.

Helen told him, with a sad smile and a shake of the head, that people survived these passions, and as for long engagements contracted between very young men and old women—she knew an instance in her own family—Laura's poor father was an instance—how fatal they were.

Mr. Pen, however, was resolved that death must be his doom in case of disappointment, and rather than this—rather than baulk him in fact—this lady would have submitted to any sacrifice or personal pain, and would have gone down on her knees and have kissed the feet of a Hottentot daughter-in-law.

Arthur knew his power over the widow, and the young tyrant was touched whilst he exercised it. In those two days he brought her almost into submission, and patronised her very kindly; and he passed one evening with the lovely pie-maker at Chatteris, in which he bragged of his influence over his mother; and he spent the other night in composing a most flaming and conceited copy of verses to his divinity, in which he vowed, like Montrose, that he would make her famous with his sword and glorious by his pen, and that he would love her as no mortal woman had been adored since the creation of womankind.

It was on that night, long after midnight, that wakeful Helen,

passing stealthily by her son's door, saw a light streaming through the chink of the door into the dark passage, and heard Pen tossing and tumbling and mumbling verses in his bed. She waited outside for a while, anxiously listening to him. In infantile fevers and early boyish illnesses, many a night before, the kind soul had so kept watch. She turned the lock very softly now, and went in so gently, that Pen for a moment did not see her. His face was turned from her. His papers on his desk were scattered about, and more were lying on the bed round him. He was biting a pencil and thinking of rhymes and all sorts of follies and passions. He was Hamlet jumping into Ophelia's grave : he was the Stranger taking Mrs. Haller to his arms, beautiful Mrs. Haller, with the raven ringlets falling over her shoulders. Despair and Byron, Thomas Moore and all the Loves of the Angels, Waller and Herrick, Béranger and all the love-songs he had ever read, were working and seething in this young gentleman's mind, and he was at the very height and paroxysm of the imaginative phrensy, when his mother found him.

"Arthur," said the mother's soft silver voice : and he started up and turned round. He clutched some of the papers and pushed them under the pillow.

"Why don't you go to sleep, my dear?" she said, with a sweet tender smile, and sate down on the bed and took one of his hot hands.

Pen looked at her wildly for an instant—"I couldn't sleep," he said—"I—I was—I was writing."—And hereupon he flung his arms round her neck and said, "O mother! I love her, I love her!"—How could such a kind soul as that help soothing and pitying him? The gentle creature did her best : and thought with a strange wonderment and tenderness, that it was only yesterday that he was a child in that bed : and how she used to come and say her prayers over it before he woke upon holiday mornings.

They were very grand verses, no doubt, although Miss Fotheringay did not understand them ; but old Cos, with a wink and a knowing finger on his nose, said, "Put them up with th' hother letthers, Milly darling. Poldoody's pomes was nothing to this." So Milly locked up the manuscripts.

When then, the Major being dressed and presentable, presented himself to Mrs. Pendennis, he found in the course of ten minutes' colloquy that the poor widow was not merely distressed at the idea of the marriage contemplated by Pen, but actually more distressed at thinking that the boy himself was unhappy about it, and that his uncle and he should have any violent altercation on the subject. She

besought Major Pendennis to be very gentle with Arthur: "He has a very high spirit, and will not brook unkind words," she hinted. "Doctor Portman spoke to him rather roughly—and I must own unjustly, the other night—for my dearest boy's honour is as high as any mother can desire—but Pen's answer quite frightened me, it was so indignant. Recollect he is a man now; and be very—very cautious," said the widow, laying a fair long hand on the Major's sleeve.

He took it up, kissed it gallantly, and looked in her alarmed face with wonder, and a scorn which he was too polite to show. "*Bon Dieu!*" thought the old negotiator, "the boy has actually talked the woman round, and she'd get him a wife as she would a toy if Master cried for it. Why are there no such things as *lettres-de-cachet*—and a Bastille for young fellows of family?" The Major lived in such good company that he might be excused for feeling like an Earl.—He kissed the widow's timid hand, pressed it in both his, and laid it down on the table with one of his own over it, as he smiled and looked her in the face.

"Confess," said he, "now, that you are thinking how you possibly can make it up to your conscience to let the boy have his own way."

She blushed, and was moved in the usual manner of females. "I am thinking that he is very unhappy—and I am too"—

"To contradict him or to let him have his own wish?" asked the other; and added, with great comfort to his inward self, "I'm d—d if he shall."

"To think that he should have formed so foolish and cruel and fatal an attachment," the widow said, "which can but end in pain whatever be the issue."

"The issue shan't be marriage, my dear sister," the Major said resolutely. "We're not going to have a Pendennis, the head of the house, marry a strolling mountebank from a booth. No, no, we won't marry into Greenwich Fair, ma'am."

"If the match is broken suddenly off," the widow interposed, "I don't know what may be the consequence. I know Arthur's ardent temper, the intensity of his affections, the agony of his pleasures and disappointments, and I tremble at this one if it must be. Indeed, indeed, it must not come on him too suddenly."

"My dear madam," the Major said, with an air of the deepest commiseration, "I've no doubt Arthur will have to suffer confoundedly before he gets over the little disappointment. But is he, think you, the only person who has been so rendered miserable?"

"No, indeed," said Helen, holding down her eyes. She was thinking of her own case, and was at that moment seventeen again, and most miserable.

"I, myself," whispered her brother-in-law, have undergone a disappointment in early life. A young woman with fifteen thousand pounds, niece to an Earl—most accomplished creature—a third of her money would have run up my promotion in no time, and I should have been a lieutenant-colonel at thirty: but it might not be. I was but a penniless lieutenant: her parents interfered: and I embarked for India, where I had the honour of being secretary to Lord Buckley, when Commander-in-Chief—without her. What happened? We returned our letters, sent back our locks of hair (the Major here passed his fingers through his wig), we suffered—but we recovered. She is now a baronet's wife with thirteen grown-up children; altered, it is true, in person; but her daughters remind me of what she was, and the third is to be presented early next week."

Helen did not answer. She was still thinking of old times. I suppose if one lives to be a hundred, there are certain passages of one's early life whereof the recollection will always carry us back to youth again, and that Helen was thinking of one of these.

"Look at my own brother, my dear creature," the Major continued gallantly: "he himself, you know, had a little disappointment when he started in the—the medical profession—an eligible opportunity presented itself. Miss Balls, I remember the name, was daughter of an apoth—a practitioner in very large practice; my brother had very nearly succeeded in his suit.—But difficulties arose: disappointments supervened, and—and I am sure he had no reason to regret the disappointment which gave him this hand," said the Major, and he once more politely pressed Helen's fingers.

"Those marriages between people of such different rank and age," said Helen, "are sad things. I have known them produce a great deal of unhappiness.—Laura's father, my cousin, who—who was brought up with me"—she added, in a low voice, "was an instance of that."

"Most injudicious," cut in the Major. "I don't know anything more painful than for a man to marry his superior in age or his inferior in station. Fancy marrying a woman of a low rank of life, and having your house filled with her confounded tag-rag-and-bobtail relations! Fancy your wife attached to a mother who dropped her h's, or called Maria Marire! How are you to introduce her into society? My dear Mrs. Pendennis, I will name no names, but in the very best circles of

London society I have seen men suffering the most excruciating agony, I have known them to be cut, to be lost utterly, from the vulgarity of their wives' connections. What did Lady Snapperton do last year at her *déjeuner dansant* after the Bohemian Ball? She told Lord Brouncker that he might bring his daughters or send them with a proper chaperon, but that she would not receive Lady Brouncker: who was a druggist's daughter, or some such thing, and as Tom Wagg remarked of her, never wanted medicine certainly, for she never had an *h* in her life. Good Ged, what would have been the trifling pang of a separation in the first instance to the enduring infliction of a constant misalliance and intercourse with low people?"

"What, indeed!" said Helen, dimly disposed towards laughter, but yet checking the inclination, because she remembered in what prodigious respect her deceased husband held Major Pendennis and his stories of the great world.

"Then this fatal woman is ten years older than that silly young scapegrace of an Arthur. What happens in such cases, my dear creature? I don't mind telling *you* now we are alone: that in the highest state of society, misery, undeviating misery, is the result. Look at Lord Clodworthy come into a room with his wife—why, good Ged, she looks like Clodworthy's mother. What's the case between Lord and Lady Willowbank, whose love match was notorious? He has already cut her down twice when she has hanged herself out of jealousy for Mademoiselle de Sainte Cunegonde, the dancer; and mark my words, good Ged, one day he'll *not* cut the old woman down. No, my dear madam, you are not in the world, but I am: you are a little romantic and sentimental (you know you are—women with those large beautiful eyes always are); you must leave this matter to my experience. Marry this woman! Marry at eighteen an actress of thirty—bah bah!—I would as soon he sent into the kitchen and married the cook."

"I know the evils of premature engagements," sighed out Helen: and as she has made this allusion no less than thrice in the course of the above conversation, and seems to be so oppressed with the notion of long engagements and unequal marriages, and as the circumstance we have to relate will explain what perhaps some persons are anxious to know, namely who little Laura is, who has appeared more than once before us, it will be as well to clear up these points in another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH PEN IS KEPT WAITING AT THE DOOR, WHILE THE READER IS INFORMED WHO LITTLE LAURA WAS.

ONCE upon a time, then, there was a young gentleman of Cambridge University who came to pass the long vacation at the village where young Helen Thistlewood was living with her mother, the widow of the lieutenant slain at Copenhagen. This gentleman, whose name was the Reverend Francis Bell, was nephew to Mrs. Thistlewood, and by consequence, own cousin to Miss Helen, so that it was very right that he should take lodgings in his aunt's house, who lived in a very small way; and there he passed the long vacation, reading with three or four pupils who accompanied him to the village. Mr. Bell was fellow of a college, and famous in the University for his learning and skill as a tutor.

His two kinswomen understood pretty early that the reverend gentleman was engaged to be married, and was only waiting for a college living to enable him to fulfil his engagement. His intended bride was the daughter of another parson, who had acted as Mr. Bell's

own private tutor in Bell's early life, and it was whilst under Mr. Coacher's roof, indeed, and when only a boy of seventeen or eighteen years of age, that the impetuous young Bell had flung himself at the feet of Miss Martha Coacher, whom he was helping to pick peas in the garden. On his knees, before those peas and her, he pledged himself to an endless affection.

Miss Coacher was by many years the young fellow's senior : and her own heart had been lacerated by many previous disappointments in the matrimonial line. No less than three pupils of her father had trifled with those young affections. The apothecary of the village had despicably jilted her. The dragoon officer, with whom she had danced so many many times during that happy season which she passed at Bath with her gouty grandmamma, one day gaily shook his bridle-rein and galloped away, never to return. Wounded by the shafts of repeated ingratitude, can it be wondered at that the heart of Martha Coacher should pant to find rest somewhere? She listened to the proposals of the gawky gallant honest boy, with great kindness and good-humour; at the end of his speech she said, "Law Bell, I'm sure you are too young to think of such things;" but intimated that she too would revolve them in her own virgin bosom. She could not refer Mr. Bell to her mamma, for Mr. Coacher was a widower, and being immersed in his books, was of course unable to take the direction of so frail and wondrous an article as a lady's heart, which Miss Martha had to manage for herself.

A lock of her hair tied up in a piece of blue ribbon, conveyed to the happy Bell the result of the Vestal's conference with herself. Thrice before had she snipt off one of her auburn ringlets and given them away. The possessors were faithless, but the hair had grown again : and Martha had indeed occasion to say that men were deceivers, when she handed over this token of love to the simple boy.

Number 6, however, was an exception to former passions—Francis Bell was the most faithful of lovers. When his time arrived to go to college, and it became necessary to acquaint Mr. Coacher of the arrangements that had been made, the latter cried, "God bless my soul, I hadn't the least idea what was going on;" as was indeed very likely, for he had been taken in three times before in precisely a similar manner ; and Francis went to the University resolved to conquer honours, so as to be able to lay them at the feet of his beloved Martha.

This prize in view made him labour prodigiously. News came, term after term, of the honours he won. He sent the prize-books for

his college essays to old Coacher, and his silver declamation cup to Miss Martha. In due season he was high among the Wranglers, and a Fellow of his College; and during all the time of these transactions a constant tender correspondence was kept up with Miss Coacher, to whose influence, and perhaps with justice, he attributed the successes which he had won.

By the time, however, when the Rev. Francis Bell, M.A., and Fellow and Tutor of his College, was twenty-six years of age, it happened that Miss Coacher was thirty-four, nor had her charms, her manners, or her temper improved since that sunny day in the spring-time of life when he found her picking peas in the garden. Having achieved his honours, he relaxed in the ardour of his studies, and his judgment and tastes also perhaps became cooler. The sunshine of the pea-garden faded away from Miss Martha, and poor Bell found himself engaged—and his hand pledged to that bond in a thousand letters—to a coarse, ill-tempered, ill-favoured, ill-mannered, middle-aged woman.

It was in consequence of one of many altercations (in which Martha's eloquence shone, and in which therefore she was frequently pleased to indulge), that Francis refused to take his pupils to Bearleader's Green, where Mr. Coacher's living was, and where Bell was in the habit of spending the summer: and he bethought him that he would pass the vacation at his aunt's village, which he had not seen for many years—not since little Helen was a girl, and used to sit on his knee. Down then he came and lived with them. Helen was grown a beautiful young woman now. The cousins were nearly four months together, from June to October. They walked in the summer evenings: they met in the early morn. They read out of the same book when the old lady dozed at night over the candles. What little Helen knew, Frank taught her. She sang to him: she gave her artless heart to him. She was aware of all his story. Had he made any secret?—had he not shown the picture of the woman to whom he was engaged, and with a blush,—her letters, hard, eager, and cruel?—The days went on and on, happier and closer, with more kindness, more confidence, and more pity. At last one morning in October came when Francis went back to college, and the poor girl felt that her tender heart was gone with him.

Frank too wakened up from the delightful midsummer-dream to the horrible reality of his own pain. He gnashed and tore at the chain which bound him. He was frantic to break it and be free. Should he confess?—give his savings to the woman to whom he was

bound, and beg his release?—there was time yet—he temporised. No living might fall in for years to come. The cousins went on corresponding sadly and fondly: the betrothed woman, hard, jealous, and dissatisfied, complaining bitterly, and with reason, of her Francis's altered tone.

At last things came to a crisis, and the new attachment was discovered. Francis owned it, cared not to disguise it, rebuked Martha with her violent temper and angry imperiousness, and, worst of all, with her inferiority and her age.

Her reply was, that if he did not keep his promise she would carry his letters into every court in the kingdom—letters in which his love was pledged to her ten thousand times; and, after exposing him to the world as the perjurer and traitor he was, she would kill herself.

Frank had one more interview with Helen, whose mother was dead then, and who was living companion with old Lady Pontypool,—one more interview, where it was resolved that he was to do his duty; that is, to redeem his vow; that is, to pay a debt cozened from him by a sharper; that is, to make two honest people miserable. So the two judged their duty to be, and they parted.

The living fell in only too soon; but yet Frank Bell was quite a grey and worn-out man when he was inducted into it. Helen wrote him a letter on his marriage, beginning, "My dear Cousin," and ending "always truly yours." She sent him back the other letters, and the lock of his hair—all but a small piece. She had it in her desk when she was talking to the Major.

Bell lived for three or four years in his living, at the end of which time, the Chaplainship of Coventry Island falling vacant, Frank applied for it privately, and having procured it, announced the appointment to his wife. She objected, as she did to everything. He told her bitterly that he did not want her to come: so she went. Bell went out in Governor Crawley's time, and was very intimate with that gentleman in his later years. And it was in Coventry Island, years after his own marriage, and five years after he had heard of the birth of Helen's boy, that his own daughter was born.

She was not the daughter of the first Mrs. Bell, who died of island fever very soon after Helen Pendennis and her husband, to whom Helen had told everything, wrote to inform Bell of the birth of their child. "I was old, was I?" said Mrs. Bell the first; "I was old, and her inferior, was I? but I married you, Mr. Bell, and kept you from marrying her;" and hereupon she died. Bell married a colonial

lady, whom he loved fondly. But he was not doomed to prosper in love; and, this lady dying in child-birth, Bell gave up too: sending his little girl home to Helen Pendennis and her husband, with a parting prayer that they would befriend her.

The little thing came to Fairoaks from Bristol, which is not very far off, dressed in black, and in company of a soldier's wife, her nurse, at parting from whom she wept bitterly. But she soon dried up her grief under Helen's motherly care.

Round her neck she had a locket with hair, which Helen had given, ah how many years ago! to poor Francis, dead and buried. This child was all that was left of him, and she cherished, as so tender a creature would, the legacy which he had bequeathed to her. The girl's name, as his dying letter stated, was Helen Laura. But John Pendennis, though he accepted the trust, was always rather jealous of the orphan; and gloomily ordered that she should be called by her own mother's name; and not by that first one which her father had given her. She was afraid of Mr. Pendennis, to the last moment of his life. And it was only when her husband was gone that Helen dared openly to indulge in the tenderness which she felt for the little girl.

Thus it was that Laura Bell became Mrs. Pendennis's daughter. Neither her husband nor that gentleman's brother, the Major, viewed her with very favourable eyes. She reminded the first of circumstances in his wife's life which he was forced to accept, but would have forgotten much more willingly: and as for the second, how could he regard her? She was neither related to his own family of Pendennis, nor to any nobleman in this empire, and she had but a couple of thousand pounds for her fortune.

And now let Mr. Pen come in, who has been waiting all this while.

Having strung up his nerves, and prepared himself, without at the door, for the meeting, he came to it, determined to face the awful uncle. He had settled in his mind that the encounter was to be a fierce one, and was resolved on bearing it through with all the courage and dignity of the famous family which he represented. And he flung open the door and entered with the most severe and warlike expression, armed *cap-à-pié* as it were, with lance couched and plumes displayed, and glancing at his adversary, as if to say, "Come on, I'm ready."

The old man of the world, as he surveyed the boy's demeanour, could hardly help a grin at his admirable pompous simplicity. Major

Pendennis too had examined his ground; and finding that the widow was already half won over to the enemy, and having a shrewd notion that threats and tragic exhortations would have no effect upon the boy, who was inclined to be perfectly stubborn and awfully serious, the Major laid aside the authoritative manner at once, and with the most good-humoured natural smile in the world, held out his hands to Pen, shook the lad's passive fingers gaily, and said, "Well, Pen, my boy, tell us all about it."

Helen was delighted with the generosity of the Major's good humour. On the contrary, it quite took aback and disappointed poor Pen, whose nerves were strung up for a tragedy, and who felt that his grand *entrée* was altogether baulked and ludicrous. He blushed and winced with mortified vanity and bewilderment. He felt immensely inclined to begin to cry. "I—I—I didn't know that you were come till just now," he said: "is—is—town very full I suppose?"

If Pen could hardly gulp his tears down, it was all the Major could do to keep from laughter. He turned round and shot a comical glance at Mrs. Pendennis, who too felt that the scene was at once ridiculous and sentimental. And so, having nothing to say, she went up and kissed Mr. Pen: as he thought of her tenderness and soft obedience to his wishes, it is very possible too the boy was melted.

"What a couple of fools they are!" thought the old guardian. "If I hadn't come down, she would have driven over in state to pay a visit and give her blessing to the young lady's family."

"Come, come," said he, still grinning at the couple, "let us have as little sentiment as possible, and Pen, my good fellow, tell us the whole story."

Pen got back at once to his tragic and heroical air. "The story is, sir," said he, "as I have written it to you before. I have made the acquaintance of a most beautiful and most virtuous lady; of a high family, although in reduced circumstances; I have found the woman in whom I know that the happiness of my life is centred; I feel that I never, never can think about any woman but her. I am aware of the difference of our ages and other difficulties in my way. But my affection was so great that I felt I could surmount all these;—that we both could: and she has consented to unite her lot with mine, and to accept my heart and my fortune."

"How much is that, my boy?" said the Major. "Has anybody left you some money? I don't know that you are worth a shilling in the world."

"You know what I have is his," cried out Mrs. Pendennis.

"Good heavens, madam, hold your tongue!" was what the guardian was disposed to say; but he kept his temper, not without a struggle. "No doubt, no doubt," he said. "You would sacrifice anything for him. Everybody knows that. But it is, after all then, your fortune which Pen is offering to the young lady; and of which he wishes to take possession at eighteen."

"I know my mother will give me anything," Pen said, looking rather disturbed.

"Yes, my good fellow, but there is reason in all things. If your mother keeps the house, it is but fair that she should select her company. When you give her house over her head, and transfer her banker's account to yourself for the benefit of Miss What-d'-you-call'em—Miss Costigan—don't you think you should at least have consulted my sister as one of the principal parties in the transaction? I am speaking to you, you see, without the least anger or assumption of authority, such as the law and your father's will give me over you for three years to come—but as one man of the world to another,—and I ask you, if you think that, because you can do what you like with your mother, therefore you have a right to do so? As you are her dependant, would it not have been more generous to wait before you took this step, and at least to have paid her the courtesy to ask her leave?"

Pen held down his head, and began dimly to perceive that the action on which he had prided himself as a most romantic, generous instance of disinterested affection, was perhaps a very selfish and headstrong piece of folly.

"I did it in a moment of passion," said Pen, floundering; "I was not aware what I was going to say or to do" (and in this he spoke with perfect sincerity). "But now it is said, and I stand to it. No; I neither can nor will recall it. I'll die rather than do so. And I—I don't want to burden my mother," he continued. "I'll work for myself. I'll go on the stage, and act with her. She—she says I should do well there."

"But will she take you on those terms?" the Major interposed. "Mind, I do not say that Miss Costigan is not the most disinterested of women: but, don't you suppose now, fairly, that your position as a young gentleman of ancient birth and decent expectations, forms a part of the cause why she finds your addresses welcome?"

"I'll die, I say, rather than forfeit my pledge to her," said Pen, doubling his fists and turning red.

"Who asks you, my dear friend?" answered the imperturbable guardian. "No gentleman breaks his word, of course, when it has been given freely. But, after all, you can wait. You owe something to your mother, something to your family—something to me as your father's representative."

"Oh, of course," Pen said, feeling rather relieved.

"Well, as you have pledged your word to her, give us another, will you, Arthur?"

"What is it?" Arthur asked.

"That you will make no private marriage—that you won't be taking a trip to Scotland, you understand."

"That would be a falsehood. Pen never told his mother a falsehood," Helen said.

Pen hung down his head again, and his eyes filled with tears of shame. Had not this whole intrigue been a falsehood to that tender and confiding creature who was ready to give up all for his sake? He gave his uncle his hand.

"No, sir—on my word of honour, as a gentleman," he said, "I will never marry without my mother's consent!" and giving Helen a bright parting look of confidence and affection unchangeable, the boy went out of the drawing-room into his own study.

"He's an angel—he's an angel," the mother cried out in one of her usual raptures.

"He comes of a good stock, ma'am," said her brother-in-law—"of a good stock on both sides." The Major was greatly pleased with the result of his diplomacy—so much so, that he once more saluted the tips of Mrs. Pendennis's glove, and dropping the curt, manly, and straightforward tone in which he had conducted the conversation with the lad, assumed a certain drawl, which he always adopted when he was most conceited and fine.

"My dear creature," said he, in that his politest tone, "I think it certainly as well that I came down, and I flatter myself that last *botte* was a successful one. I tell you how I came to think of it. Three years ago my kind friend Lady Ferrybridge sent for me in the greatest state of alarm about her son Gretna, whose affair you remember, and implored me to use my influence with the young gentleman, who was engaged in an *affaire de cœur* with a Scotch clergyman's daughter, Miss Mac Toddy. I implored, I entreated gentle measures. But Lord Ferrybridge was furious, and tried the high hand. Gretna was sulky and silent, and his parents thought they had conquered. But what was the fact, my dear creature? The young people had been married

for three months before Lord Ferrybridge knew anything about it. And that was why I extracted the promise from Master Pen."

"Arthur would never have done so," Mrs. Pendennis said.

"He hasn't,—that is one comfort," answered the brother-in-law.

Like a wary and patient man of the world, Major Pendennis did not press poor Pen any farther for the moment, but hoped the best from time, and that the young fellow's eyes would be opened before long to see the absurdity of which he was guilty. And having found out how keen the boy's point of honour was, he worked kindly upon that kindly feeling with great skill, discoursing him over their wine after dinner, and pointing out to Pen the necessity of a perfect uprightness and openness in all his dealings, and entreating that his communications with his interesting young friend (as the Major politely called Miss Fotheringay) should be carried on with the knowledge, if not approbation, of Mrs. Pendennis. "After all, Pen," the Major said, with a convenient frankness that did not displease the boy, whilst it advanced the interests of the negotiator, "you must bear in mind that you are throwing yourself away. Your mother may submit to your marriage as she would to anything else you desired, if you did but cry long enough for it: but be sure of this, that it can never please her. You take a young woman off the boards of a country theatre and prefer her, for such is the case, to one of the finest ladies in England. And your mother will submit to your choice, but you can't suppose that she will be happy under it. I have often fancied, *entre nous*, that my sister had it in her eye to make a marriage between you and that little ward of hers—Flora, Laura—what's her name? And I always determined to do my small endeavour to prevent any such match. The child has but two thousand pounds, I am given to understand. It is only with the utmost economy and care that my sister can provide for the decent maintenance of her house, and for your appearance and education as a gentleman; and I don't care to own to you that I had other and much higher views for you. With your name and birth, sir—with your talents, which I suppose are respectable, with the friends whom I have the honour to possess, I could have placed you in an excellent position—a remarkable position for a young man of such exceeding small means, and had hoped to see you, at least, try to restore the honours of our name. Your mother's softness stopped one prospect, or you might have been a general, like our gallant ancestor who fought at Ramillies and Malplaquet. I had another plan in view: my excellent and kind friend, Lord Bagwig, who is very well disposed towards me, would, I have little doubt, have attached you to his mission at Pum-

pernickel, and you might have advanced in the diplomatic service. But, pardon me for recurring to the subject; how is a man to serve a young gentleman of eighteen, who proposes to marry a lady of thirty, whom he has selected from a booth in a fair?—well, not a fair,—barn. That profession at once is closed to you. The public service is closed to you. Society is closed to you. You see, my good friend, to what you bring yourself. You may get on at the bar to be sure, where I am given to understand that gentlemen of merit occasionally marry out of their kitchens; but in no other profession. Or you may come and live down here—down here, *mon Dieu!* for ever" (said the Major, with a dreary shrug, as he thought with inexpressible fondness of Pall Mall), "where your mother will receive the Mrs. Arthur that is to be, with perfect kindness; where the good people of the county won't visit you; and where, by Gad, sir, I shall be shy of visiting you myself, for I'm a plain-spoken man, and I own to you that I like to live with gentlemen for my companions; where you will have to live, with rum-and-water drinking gentlemen-farmers, and drag through your life the young husband of an old woman, who, if she doesn't quarrel with your mother, will at least cost that lady her position in society, and drag her down into that dubious caste into which you must inevitably fall. It is no affair of mine, my good sir. I am not angry. Your downfall will not hurt me farther than that it will extinguish the hopes I had of seeing my family once more taking its place in the world. It is only your mother and yourself that will be ruined. And I pity you both from my soul. Pass the claret: it is some I sent to your poor father; I remember I bought it at poor Lord Levant's sale. But of course," added the Major, smacking the wine, "having engaged yourself, you will do what becomes you as a man of honour, however fatal your promise may be. However, promise us on your side, my boy, what I set out by entreating you to grant,—that there shall be nothing clandestine, that you will pursue your studies, that you will only visit your interesting friend at proper intervals. Do you write to her much?"

Pen blushed and said, "Why, yes, he had written."

"I suppose verses, eh! as well as prose? I was a dab at verses myself. I recollect when I first joined, I used to write verses for the fellows in the regiment; and did some pretty things in that way. I was talking to my old friend General Hobbler about some lines I dashed off for him in the year 1806, when we were at the Cape, and, Gad, he remembered every line of them still; for he'd used 'em so often, the old rogue, and had actually tried 'em on Mrs. Hobbler, sir—who brought him sixty thousand pounds. I suppose you've tried verses, eh Pen?"

Pen blushed again, and said, "Why, yes, he had written verses."

"And does the fair one respond in poetry or prose?" asked the Major, eyeing his nephew with the queerest expression, as much as to say, "O Moses and Green Spectacles! what a fool the boy is."

Pen blushed again. She had written, but not in verse, the young lover owned, and he gave his breast-pocket the benefit of a squeeze with his left arm, which the Major remarked, according to his wont.

"You have got the letters there, I see," said the old campaigner, nodding at Pen and pointing to his own chest (which was manfully wadded with cotton by Mr. Stultz). "You know you have. I would give twopence to see 'em."

"Why," said Pen, twiddling the stalks of the strawberries, "I—I," but this sentence was never finished; for Pen's face was so comical and embarrassed, as the Major watched it, that the elder could contain his gravity no longer, and burst into a fit of laughter, in which chorus Pen himself was obliged to join after a minute: when he broke out fairly into a guffaw.

It sent them with great good humour into Mrs. Pendennis's drawing-room. She was pleased to hear them laughing in the hall as they crossed it.

"You sly rascal!" said the Major, putting his arm gaily on Pen's shoulder, and giving a playful push at the boy's breast-pocket. He felt the papers crackling there sure enough. The young fellow was delighted —conceited—triumphant—and in one word, a spoony.

The pair came to the tea-table in the highest spirits. The Major's politeness was beyond expression. He had never tasted such good tea, and such bread was only to be had in the country. He asked Mrs. Pendennis for one of her charming songs. He then made Pen sing, and was delighted and astonished at the beauty of the boy's voice: he made his nephew fetch his maps and drawings, and praised them as really remarkable works of talent in a young fellow: he complimented him on his French pronunciation: he flattered the simple boy as adroitly as ever lover flattered a mistress: and when bed time came, mother and son went to their several rooms perfectly enchanted with the kind Major.

When they had reached those apartments, I suppose Helen took to her knees as usual: and Pen read over his letters before going to bed: just as if he didn't know every word of them by heart already. In truth there were but three of those documents: and to learn their contents required no great effort of memory.

In No. 1, Miss Fotheringay presents grateful compliments to Mr.

Pendennis, and in her papa's name and her own begs to thank him for his *most beautiful presents.* They will always be *kept carefully;* and Miss F. and Captain C. will never forget the *delightful evening* which they passed on *Tuesday last.*

No. 2, said—Dear Sir, we shall have a small quiet party of *social friends* at our *humble board,* next Tuesday evening, at an *early tea,* when I shall wear the *beautiful scarf* which, with its *accompanying delightful verses,* I shall *ever, ever cherish:* and papa bids me say how happy he will be if you will join "*the feast of reason and the flow of soul*" in our *festive little party,* as I am sure will be your *truly grateful* EMILY FOTHERINGAY.

No. 3 was somewhat more confidential, and showed that matters had proceeded rather far. You were *odious* yesterday night, the letter said. Why did you not come to the stage-door? Papa could not escort me on account of his eye; he had an accident, and fell down over a loose carpet on the stair on Sunday night. I saw you looking at Miss Diggle all night; and you were *so enchanted* with Lydia Languish you scarcely once looked at Julia. I could have *crushed* Bingley, I was so *angry.* I play *Ella Rosenberg* on Friday: will you come then? *Miss Diggle performs*—ever your E. F.

These three letters Mr. Pen used to read at intervals, during the day and night, and embrace with that delight and fervour which such beautiful compositions surely warranted. A thousand times at least he had kissed fondly the musky satin paper, made sacred to him by the hand of Emily Fotheringay. This was all he had in return for his passion and flames, his vows and protests, his rhymes and similes, his wakeful nights and endless thoughts, his fondness, fears and folly. The young wiseacre had pledged away his all for this: signed his name to endless promissory notes, conferring his heart upon the bearer: bound himself for life, and got back twopence as an equivalent. For Miss Costigan was a young lady of such perfect good conduct and self-command, that she never would have thought of giving more, and reserved the treasures of her affection until she could transfer them lawfully at church.

Howbeit, Mr. Pen was content with what tokens of regard he had got, and mumbled over his three letters in a rapture of high spirits, and went to sleep delighted with his kind old uncle from London, who must evidently yield to his wishes in time; and, in a word, in a preposterous state of contentment with himself and all the world.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH THE MAJOR OPENS THE CAMPAIGN.

ET those who have the blessed privilege of an *entrée* into the most select circles, admit that Major Pendennis was a man of no ordinary generosity and affection, in the sacrifice which he now made. He gave up London in May,—his newspapers and his mornings—his afternoons from club to club, his little confidential visits to my ladies, his rides in Rotten Row, his dinners, and his stall at the Opera, his rapid escapades to Fulham or Richmond on Saturdays and Sundays, his bow from my Lord Duke or my Lord Marquis at the great London entertainments, and his name in the "Morning Post" of the succeeding day,—his quieter little festivals, more select, secret, and delightful—all these he resigned to lock himself into a lone little country house, with a simple widow and a greenhorn of a son, a mawkish curate, and a little girl of twelve years of age.

He made the sacrifice, and it was the greater that few knew the extent of it. His letters came down franked from town, and he showed the invitations to Helen with a sigh. It was beautiful and tragical to see him refuse one party after another—at least to those who could understand, as Helen didn't, the melancholy grandeur of his self-denial. Helen did not, or only smiled at the awful pathos with which the Major spoke of the Court Guide in general: but young Pen looked

with great respect at the great names upon the superscriptions of his uncle's letters, and listened to the Major's stories about the fashionable world with constant interest and sympathy.

The elder Pendennis's rich memory was stored with thousands of these delightful tales, and he poured them into Pen's willing ear. He knew the name and pedigree of everybody in the Peerage, and everybody's relations. "My dear boy," he would say, with a mournful earnestness and veracity, "you cannot begin your genealogical studies too early; I wish to Heaven you would read in Debrett every day. Not so much the historical part (for the pedigrees, between ourselves, are many of them very fabulous, and there are few families that can show such a clear descent as our own) as the account of family alliances, and who is related to whom. I have known a man's career in life blasted, by ignorance on this all-important subject. Why, only last month, at dinner at my Lord Hobanob's, a young man, who has lately been received amongst us, young Mr. Suckling (author of a work, I believe), began to speak lightly of Admiral Bowser's conduct for ratting to Ministers, in what I must own is the most audacious manner. But who do you think sate next and opposite to this Mr. Suckling? Why—why, next to him was Lady Grampound Bowser's daughter, and opposite to him was Lord Grampound Bowser's son-in-law. The infatuated young man went on cutting his jokes at the Admiral's expense, fancying that all the world was laughing with him, and I leave you to imagine Lady Hobanob's feelings—Hobanob's!—those of every well-bred man, as the wretched *intrus* was so exposing himself. *He* will never dine again in South Street. I promise you *that.*"

With such discourses the Major entertained his nephew, as he paced the terrace in front of the house for his two hours' constitutional walk, or as they sate together after dinner over their wine. He grieved that Sir Francis Clavering had not come down to the Park, to live in it since his marriage, and to make a society for the neighbourhood. He mourned that Lord Eyrie was not in the country, that he might take Pen and present him to his lordship. "He has daughters," the Major said. "Who knows? you might have married Lady Emily or Lady Barbara Trehawk; but all those dreams are over; my poor fellow, you must lie on the bed which you have made for yourself."

These things to hear did young Pendennis seriously incline. They are not so interesting in print as when delivered orally; but the Major's anecdotes of the great George, of the Royal Dukes, of the

statesmen, beauties, and fashionable ladies of the day, filled young Pen's soul with longing and wonder; and he found the conversations with his guardian, which sadly bored and perplexed poor Mrs. Pendennis, for his own part never tedious.

It can't be said that Mr. Pen's new guide, philosopher and friend, discoursed him on the most elevated subjects, or treated the subjects which he chose in the most elevated manner. But his morality, such as it was, was consistent. It might not, perhaps, tend to a man's progress in another world, but it was pretty well calculated to advance his interests in this; and then it must be remembered, that the Major never for one instant doubted that his views were the only views practicable, and that his conduct was perfectly virtuous and respectable. He was a man of honour, in a word: and had his eyes, what he called, open. He took pity on this young greenhorn of a nephew, and wanted to open his eyes too.

No man, for instance, went more regularly to church when in the country than the old bachelor. "It don't matter so much in town, Pen," he said, "for there the women go and the men are not missed. But when a gentleman is *sur ses terres*, he must give an example to the country people: and if I could turn a tune, I even think I should sing. The Duke of St. David's, whom I have the honour of knowing, always sings in the country, and let me tell you, it has a doosed fine effect from the family pew. And you are somebody down here. As long as the Claverings are away you are the first man in the parish: or as good as any. You might represent the town if you played your cards well. Your poor dear father would have done so had he lived; so might you.—Not if you marry a lady, however amiable, whom the country people won't meet.—Well, well: it's a painful subject. Let us change it, my boy." But if Major Pendennis changed the subject once he recurred to it a score of times in the day: and the moral of his discourse always was, that Pen was throwing himself away. Now it does not require much coaxing or wheedling to make a simple boy believe that he is a very fine fellow.

Pen was glad enough, we have said, to listen to his elder's talk. The conversation of Captain Costigan became by no means pleasant to him, and the idea of that tipsy old father-in-law haunted him with terror. He couldn't bring that man, unshaven and reeking of punch, to associate with his mother. Even about Emily—he faltered when the pitiless guardian began to question him. "Was she accomplished?" He was obliged to own, no. "Was she clever?" Well, she had a very good average intellect: but he could not absolutely say she was

clever. "Come, let us see some of her letters." So Pen confessed that he had but those three of which we have made mention—and that they were but trivial invitations or answers.

"*She* is cautious enough," the Major said, drily. "She is older than you, my poor boy;" and then he apologised with the utmost frankness and humility, and flung himself upon Pen's good feelings, begging the lad to excuse a fond old uncle, who had only his family's honour in view—for Arthur was ready to flame up in indignation whenever Miss Costigan's honesty was doubted, and swore that he would never have her name mentioned lightly, and never, never would part from her.

He repeated this to his uncle and his friends at home, and also, it must be confessed, to Miss Fotheringay and the amiable family at Chatteris, with whom he still continued to spend some portion of his time. Miss Emily was alarmed when she heard of the arrival of Pen's guardian, and rightly conceived that the Major came down with hostile intentions to herself. "I suppose ye intend to leave me, now your grand relation has come down from town. He'll carry ye off, and you'll forget your poor Emily, Mr. Arthur!"

Forget her! In her presence, in that of Miss Rouncy, the Columbine and Milly's confidential friend of the Company, in the presence of the Captain himself, Pen swore he never could think of any other woman but his beloved Miss Fotheringay; and the Captain, looking up at his foils, which were hung as a trophy on the wall of the room where Pen and he used to fence, grimly said, he would not advoise any man to meddle rashly with the affections of *his* darling child; and would never believe his gallant young Arthur, whom he treated as his son, whom he called his son, would ever be guilty of conduct so revolting to every idaya of honour and humanitee.

He went up and embraced Pen after speaking. He cried, and wiped his eye with one large dirty hand as he clasped Pen with the other. Arthur shuddered in that grasp, and thought of his uncle at home. His father-in-law looked unusually dirty and shabby; the odour of whisky-and-water was even more decided than in common. How was he to bring that man and his mother together? He trembled when he thought that he had absolutely written to Costigan (inclosing to him a sovereign, the loan of which the worthy gentleman needed), and saying, that one day he hoped to sign himself his affectionate son, Arthur Pendennis. He was glad to get away from Chatteris that day; from Miss Rouncy the *confidante;* from the old toping father-in-law; from the divine Emily herself. "O Emily, Emily," he cried inwardly,

as he rattled homewards on Rebecca, "you little know what sacrifices I am making for you!—for you who are always so cold, so cautious, so mistrustful!"

Pen never rode over to Chatteris, but the Major found out on what errand the boy had been. Faithful to his plan, Major Pendennis gave his nephew no let or hindrance; but somehow the constant feeling that the senior's eye was upon him, an uneasy shame attendant upon that inevitable confession which the evening's conversation would be sure to elicit in the most natural simple manner, made Pen go less frequently to sigh away his soul at the feet of his charmer than he had been wont to do previous to his uncle's arrival. There was no use trying to deceive *him;* there was no pretext of dining with Smirke, or reading Greek plays with Foker; Pen felt, when he returned from one of his flying visits, that everybody knew whence he came, and appeared quite guilty before his mother and guardian, over their books or their game at picquet.

Once having walked out half-a-mile, to the Fairoaks' Inn, beyond the Lodge gates, to be in readiness for the Competitor coach, which changed horses there, to take a run for Chatteris, a man on the roof touched his hat to the young gentleman: it was his uncle's man, Mr. Morgan, who was going on a message for his master, and had been took up at the Lodge, as he said. And Mr. Morgan came back by the Rival, too; so that Pen had the pleasure of that domestic's company both ways. Nothing was said at home. The lad seemed to have every decent liberty; and yet he felt himself dimly watched and guarded, and that there were eyes upon him even in the presence of his Dulcinea.

In fact, Pen's suspicions were not unfounded, and his guardian had sent forth to gather all possible information regarding the lad and his interesting young friend. The discreet and ingenious Mr. Morgan, a London confidential valet, whose fidelity could be trusted, had been to Chatteris more than once, and made every inquiry regarding the past history and present habits of the Captain and his daughter. He delicately cross-examined the waiters, the ostlers, and all the inmates of the bar at the George, and got from them what little they knew respecting the worthy Captain. He was not held in very great regard there, as it appeared. The waiters never saw the colour of his money, and were warned not to furnish the poor gentleman with any liquor for which some other party was not responsible. He swaggered sadly about the coffee-room there, consumed a tooth-pick, and looked over the paper, and if any friend asked him to dinner he stayed.

From the servants of the officers at the barracks Mr. Morgan found that the Captain had so frequently and outrageously inebriated himself there, that Colonel Swallowtail had forbidden him the mess-room. The indefatigable Morgan then put himself in communication with some of the inferior actors at the theatre, and pumped them over their cigars and punch, and all agreed that Costigan was poor, shabby, and given to debt and to drink. But there was not a breath upon the reputation of Miss Fotheringay: her father's courage was reported to have displayed itself on more than one occasion towards persons disposed to treat his daughter with freedom. She never came to the theatre but with her father: in his most inebriated moments, that gentleman kept a watch over her; finally Mr. Morgan, from his own experience, added that he had been to see her hact, and was uncommon delighted with the performance, besides thinking her a most splendid woman.

Mrs. Creed, the pew-opener, confirmed these statements to Doctor Portman, who examined her personally. Mrs. Creed had nothing unfavourable to her lodger to divulge. She saw nobody; only one or two ladies of the theatre. The Captain did intoxicate himself sometimes, and did not always pay his rent regularly, but he did when he had money, or rather Miss Fotheringay did. Since the young gentleman from Clavering had been and took lessons in fencing, one or two more had come from the barracks; Sir Derby Oaks, and his young friend, Mr. Foker, which was often together; and which was always driving over from Baymouth in the tandem. But on the occasions of the lessons, Miss F. was very seldom present, and generally came downstairs to Mrs. Creed's own room.

The Doctor and the Major consulting together as they often did, groaned in spirit over that information. Major Pendennis openly expressed his disappointment; and, I believe, the Divine himself was ill-pleased at not being able to pick a hole in poor Miss Fotheringay's reputation.

Even about Pen himself, Mrs. Creed's reports were desperately favourable. "Whenever he come," Mrs. Creed said, "she always have me or one of the children with her. And Mrs. Creed, marm, says she, if you please marm, you'll on no account leave the room when that young gentleman's here. And many's the time I've seen him a lookin' as if he wished I was away, poor young man: and he took to coming in service time, when I wasn't at home, of course: but she always had one of the boys up if her Pa wasn't at home, or old Mr. Bows with her a teaching of her her lesson, or one of the young ladies of the theayter."

It was all true: whatever encouragements might have been given him before he avowed his passion, the prudence of Miss Emily was prodigious after Pen had declared himself: and the poor fellow chafed against her hopeless reserve.

The Major surveyed the state of things with a sigh. "If it were but a temporary liaison," the excellent man said, "one could bear it. A young fellow must sow his wild oats, and that sort of thing. But a virtuous attachment is the deuce. It comes of the d—d romantic notions boys get from being brought up by women."

"Allow me to say, Major, that you speak a little too like a man of the world," replied the Doctor. "Nothing can be more desirable for Pen than a virtuous attachment for a young lady of his own rank and with a corresponding fortune—this present infatuation, of course, I must deplore as sincerely as you do. If I were his guardian I should command him to give it up."

"The very means, I tell you, to make him marry to-morrow. We have got time from him, that is all, and we must do our best with that."

"I say, Major," said the Doctor, at the end of the conversation in which the above subject was discussed—"I am not, of course, a play-going man—but suppose, I say, we go and see her."

The Major laughed—he had been a fortnight at Fairoaks, and strange to say, had not thought of that. "Well," he said, "why not? After all, it is not my niece, but Miss Fotheringay the actress, and we have as good a right as any other of the public to see her if we pay our money." So upon a day when it was arranged that Pen was to dine at home, and pass the evening with his mother, the two elderly gentlemen drove over to Chatteris in the Doctor's chaise, and there, like a couple of jolly bachelors, dined at the George Inn, before proceeding to the play.

Only two other guests were in the room,—an officer of the regiment quartered at Chatteris, and a young gentleman whom the Doctor thought he had somewhere seen. They left them at their meal, however, and hastened to the theatre. It was "Hamlet" over again. Shakspeare was Article XL. of stout old Doctor Portman's creed, to which he always made a point of testifying publicly at least once in a year.

We have described the play before, and how those who saw Miss Fotheringay perform in Ophelia saw precisely the same thing on one night as on another. Both the elderly gentlemen looked at her with extraordinary interest, thinking how very much young Pen was charmed with her.

"Gad," said the Major, between his teeth, as he surveyed her when she was called forward as usual, and swept her curtsies to the scanty audience, "the young rascal has not made a bad choice."

The Doctor applauded her loudly and loyally. "Upon my word," said he, "she is a very clever actress; and I must say, Major, she is endowed with very considerable personal attractions."

"So that young officer thinks in the stage-box," Major Pendennis answered, and he pointed out to Doctor Portman's attention the young dragoon of the George Coffee-room, who sate in the box in question, and applauded with immense enthusiasm. She looked extremely sweet upon him too, thought the Major: but that's their way—and he shut up his natty opera-glass and pocketed it, as if he wished to see no more that night. Nor did the Doctor, of course, propose to stay for the after-piece, so they rose and left the theatre; the Doctor returning to Mrs. Portman, who was on a visit at the Deanery, and the Major walking home full of thought towards the George, where he had bespoken a bed.

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CHAPTER X.

FACING THE ENEMY.

AUNTERING homewards, Major Pendennis reached the hotel presently, and found Mr. Morgan, his faithful valet, awaiting him at the door, who stopped his master as he was about to take a candle to go to bed, and said, with his usual air of knowing deference, "I think, sir, if you would go into the coffee-room, there's a young gentleman there as you would like to see."

"What, is Mr. Arthur here?" the Major said, in great anger.

"No, sir—but his great friend, Mr. Foker, sir. Lady Hagnes Foker's son is here, sir. He's been asleep in the coffee-room since he took his dinner, and has just rung for his coffee, sir. And I think, p'raps, you might like to git into conversation with him," the valet said opening the coffee-room door.

The Major entered; and there indeed was Mr. Foker, the only occupant of the place. He had intended to go to the play too, but sleep had overtaken him after a copious meal, and he had flung up his legs on the bench, and indulged in a nap instead of the dramatic amusement. The Major was meditating how to address the young man, but the latter prevented him that trouble.

"Like to look at the evening paper, sir?" said Mr. Foker, who was always communicative and affable; and he took up the "Globe" from his table, and offered it to the new comer.

"I am very much obliged to you," said the Major, with a grateful bow and smile. "If I don't mistake the family likeness, I have the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Henry Foker, Lady Agnes Foker's son.

I have the happiness to name her ladyship among my acquaintances—and you bear, sir, a Rosherville face."

"Hullo! I beg your pardon," Mr. Foker said, "I took you"—he was going to say—"I took you for a commercial gent." But he stopped that phrase. "To whom have I the pleasure of speaking?" he added.

"To a relative of a friend and schoolfellow of yours—Arthur Pendennis, my nephew, who has often spoken to me about you in terms of great regard. I am Major Pendennis, of whom you may have heard him speak. May I take my soda-water at your table? I have had the pleasure of sitting at your grandfather's."

"Sir, you do me proud," said Mr. Foker, with much courtesy. "And so you are Arthur Pendennis's uncle, are you?"

"And guardian," added the Major.

"He's as good a fellow as ever stepped, sir," said Mr. Foker.

"I am glad you think so."

"And clever, too—I was always a stupid chap, I was—but you see, sir, I know 'em when they are clever, and like 'em of that sort."

"You show your taste and your modesty, too," said the Major. "I have heard Arthur repeatedly speak of you, and he said your talents were very good."

"I'm not good at the books," Mr. Foker said, wagging his head—"never could manage that—Pendennis could—he used to do half the chaps' verses—and yet you are his guardian; and I hope you will pardon me for saying that I think he's what *we* call a flat," the candid young gentleman said.

The Major found himself on the instant in the midst of a most interesting and confidential conversation. "And how is Arthur a flat?" he asked, with a smile.

"You know," Foker answered, winking at him—he would have winked at the Duke of Wellington with just as little scruple. "You know Arthur's a flat,—about women I mean."

"He is not the first of us, my dear Mr. Harry," answered the Major. "I have heard something of this—but pray tell me more."

"Why, sir, you see—it's partly my fault. We went to the play one night, and Pen was struck all of a heap with Miss Fotheringay—Costigan her real name is—an uncommon fine gal she is too; and the next morning I introduced him to the General, as we call her father—a regular old scamp—and *such* a boy for the whisky-and-water!—and he's gone on being intimate there. And he's fallen in love with her—

and I'm blessed if he hasn't proposed to her," Foker said, slapping his hand on the table, until all the dessert began to jingle.

"What! you know it too?" asked the Major.

"Know it! don't I? and many more too. We were talking about it at mess, yesterday, and chaffing Derby Oaks—until he was as mad as a hatter. Know Sir Derby Oaks? We dined together, and we

went to the play: we were standing at the door smoking, I remember, when you passed in to dinner."

"I remember Sir Thomas Oaks, his father, before he was a Baronet or a Knight; he lived in Cavendish Square, and was Physician to Queen Charlotte."

"The young one is making the money spin, I can tell you," Mr. Foker said.

"And is Sir Derby Oaks," the Major said, with great delight and anxiety, "another *soupirant?*"

"Another *what?*" inquired Mr. Foker.

"Another admirer of Miss Fotheringay?"

"Lord bless you! we call him Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and Pen Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. But mind you, nothing wrong! No, no! Miss F. is a deal too wide awake for that, Major Pendennis. She plays one off against the other. What you call two strings to her bow."

"I think you seem tolerably wide awake, too, Mr. Foker," Pendennis said, laughing.

"Pretty well, thank you, sir—how are you?" Foker replied, imperturbably. "I'm not clever, p'raps: but I *am* rather downy; and partial friends say I know what's o'clock tolerably well. Can I tell you the time of day in any way?"

"Upon my word," the Major answered, quite delighted, "I think you may be of very great service to me. You are a young man of the world, and with such one likes to deal. And as such I need not inform you that our family is by no means delighted at this absurd intrigue in which Arthur is engaged."

"I should rather think not," said Mr. Foker. "Connexion not eligible. Too much beer drunk on the premises. No Irish need apply. That I take to be your meaning."

The Major said it was, exactly: and he proceeded to examine his new acquaintance regarding the amiable family into which his nephew proposed to enter, and soon got from the candid witness a number of particulars regarding the House of Costigan.

We must do Mr. Foker the justice to say that he spoke most favourably of Mr. and Miss Costigan's moral character. "You see," said he, "I think the General is fond of the jovial bowl, and if I wanted to be very certain of my money, it isn't in his pocket I'd invest it—but he has always kept a watchful eye on his daughter, and neither he nor she will stand anything but what's honourable. Pen's attentions to her are talked about in the whole Company, and I hear all about them from a young lady who used to be very intimate with her, and with whose family I sometimes take tea in a friendly way. Miss Rouncy says, Sir Derby Oaks has been hanging about Miss Fotheringay ever since his regiment has been down here; but Pen has come in and cut him out lately, which has made the Baronet so mad, that he has been very near on the point of proposing too. Wish he would; and you'd see which of the two Miss Fotheringay would jump at."

"I thought as much," the Major said. "You give me a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Foker. I wish I could have seen you before."

"Didn't like to put in my oar," replied the other. "Don't speak till I'm asked, when, if there's no objections, I speak pretty freely. Heard your man had been hankering about my servant—didn't know myself what was going on until Miss Fotheringay and Miss Rouncy had the row about the ostrich feathers, when Miss R. told me everything."

"Miss Rouncy, I gather, was the confidante of the other?"

"Confidant? I believe you. Why, she's twice as clever a girl as Fotheringay, and literary and that, while Miss Foth can't do much more than read."

"She can write," said the Major, remembering Pen's breast-pocket.

Foker broke out into a sardonic "He, he! Rouncy writes her letters," he said: "every one of 'em; and since they've quarrelled, she don't know how the deuce to get on. Miss Rouncy is an uncommon pretty hand, whereas the other one makes dreadful work of the writing and spelling when Bows ain't by. Rouncy's been settin' her copies lately—she writes a beautiful hand, Rouncy does."

"I suppose you know it pretty well," said the Major, archly: upon which Mr. Foker winked at him again.

"I would give a great deal to have a specimen of her handwriting," continued Major Pendennis; "I dare say you could give me one."

"That would be too bad," Foker replied. "Miss F.'s writin' ain't so *very* bad, I dare say; only she got Miss R. to write the first letter, and has gone on ever since. But you mark my word, that till they are friends again the letters will stop."

"I hope they will never be reconciled," the Major said with great sincerity. "You must feel, my dear sir, as a man of the world, how fatal to my nephew's prospects in life is this step which he contemplates, and how eager we all must be to free him from this absurd engagement."

"He has come out uncommon strong," said Mr. Foker; "I have seen his verses; Rouncy copied 'em. And I said to myself when I saw 'em, 'Catch *me* writin' verses to a woman,—that's all.'"

"He has made a fool of himself, as many a good fellow has before him. How can we make him see his folly, and cure it? I am sure you will give us what aid you can in extricating a generous young man from such a pair of schemers as this father and daughter seem to be. Love on the lady's side is out of the question."

"Love, indeed?" Foker said. "If Pen hadn't two thousand a-year *when he* came of age—

"If Pen hadn't *what?*" cried out the Major in astonishment.

"Two thousand a-year: hasn't he got two thousand a-year?—the General says he has."

"My dear friend," shrieked out the Major, with an eagerness which this gentleman rarely showed, "thank you!—thank you!—I begin to see now.—Two thousand a-year! Why, his mother has but five hundred a-year in the world.—She is likely to live to eighty, and Arthur has not a shilling but what she can allow him."

"What! he ain't rich then?" Foker asked.

"Upon my honour he has no more than what I say."

"And you ain't going to leave him anything?"

The Major had sunk every shilling he could scrape together on annuity, and of course was going to leave Pen nothing; but he did not tell Foker this. "How much do you think a Major on half-pay can save?" he asked. "If these people have been looking at him as a fortune, they are utterly mistaken—and—and you have made me the happiest man in the world."

"Sir to YOU," said Mr. Foker, politely, and when they parted for the night they shook hands with the greatest cordiality; the younger gentleman promising the elder not to leave Chatteris without a further conversation in the morning. And as the Major went up to his room, and Mr. Foker smoked his cigar against the door pillars of the George, Pen, very likely, ten miles off, was lying in bed kissing the letter from his Emily.

The next morning, before Mr. Foker drove off in his drag, the insinuating Major had actually got a letter of Miss Rouncy's in his own pocket-book. Let it be a lesson to women how they write. And in very high spirits Major Pendennis went to call upon Doctor Portman at the Deanery, and told him what happy discoveries he had made on the previous night. As they sate in confidential conversation in the Dean's oak breakfast parlour they could look across the lawn and see Captain Costigan's window, at which poor Pen had been only too visible some three weeks since. The Doctor was most indignant against Mrs. Creed, the landlady, for her duplicity, in concealing Sir Derby Oaks's constant visits to her lodgers, and threatened to excommunicate her out of the Cathedral. But the wary Major thought that all things were for the best; and, having taken counsel with himself over night, felt himself quite strong enough to go and face Captain Costigan.

"I'm going to fight the dragon," he said, with a laugh, to Doctor Portman.

"And I shrive you, sir, and bid good fortune go with you," answered the Doctor. Perhaps he and Mrs. Portman and Miss Mira, as they sate with their friend, the Dean's lady, in her drawing-room, looked up more than once at the enemy's window to see if they could perceive any signs of the combat.

The Major walked round, according to the directions given him, and soon found Mrs. Creed's little door. He passed it, and as he ascended to Captain Costigan's apartment, he could hear a stamping of feet, and a great shouting of "Ha, ha!" within.

"It's Sir Derby Oaks taking his fencing lesson," said the child, who piloted Major Pendennis. "He takes it Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays."

The Major knocked, and at length a tall gentleman came forth, with a foil and mask in one hand, and a fencing glove on the other.

Pendennis made him a deferential bow. "I believe I have the honour of speaking to Captain Costigan—My name is Major Pendennis."

The Captain brought his weapon up to the salute, and said, "Major, the honer is moine; I'm deloighted to see ye."

CHAPTER XI.

NEGOTIATION.

THE Major and Captain Costigan were old soldiers and accustomed to face the enemy, so we may presume that they retained their presence of mind perfectly: but the rest of the party assembled in Cos's sitting-room were, perhaps, a little flurried at Pendennis's apparition. Miss Fotheringay's slow heart began to beat no doubt, for her cheek flushed up with a great healthy blush, as Lieutenant Sir Derby Oaks looked at her with a scowl. The little crooked old man in the window-seat, who had been witnessing the fencing-match between the two gentlemen (whose stamping and jumping had been such as to cause him to give up all attempts to continue writing the theatre music, in the copying of which he had been engaged) looked up eagerly towards the new comer as the Major of the well-blacked boots entered the apartment, distributing the most graceful bows to everybody present.

"Me daughter—me friend, Mr. Bows—me gallant young pupil and friend, I may call 'um, Sir Derby Oaks," said Costigan, splendidly waving his hand, and pointing each of these individuals to the Major's attention. "In one moment, Meejor, I'm your humble servant," and to dash into the little adjoining chamber where he slept, to give a twist to his lank hair with his hair-brush (a wonderful and ancient piece), to tear off his old stock and put on a new one which Emily had constructed for him, and to assume a handsome clean collar, and the new coat which had been ordered upon the occasion of Miss Fotheringay's benefit, was with the still active Costigan the work of a minute.

After him Sir Derby entered, and presently emerged from the same apartment, where he also cased himself in his little shell-jacket,

which fitted tightly upon the young officer's big person; and which he and Miss Fotheringay, and poor Pen too, perhaps, admired prodigiously.

Meanwhile conversation was engaged in between the actress and the new-comer; and the usual remarks about the weather had been interchanged before Costigan re-entered in his new "shoot," as he called it.

"I needn't apologoise to ye, Meejor," he said, in his richest and most courteous manner, "for receiving ye in me shirt-sleeves."

"An old soldier can't be better employed than in teaching a young one the use of his sword," answered the Major, gallantly. "I remember in old times hearing that you could use yours pretty well, Captain Costigan."

"What, ye've heard of Jack Costigan, Major!" said the other, greatly.

The Major had, indeed; he had pumped his nephew concerning his new friend, the Irish officer; and said that he perfectly well recollected meeting Mr. Costigan, and hearing him sing at Sir Richard Strachan's table at Walcheren.

At this information, and the bland and cordial manner in which it was conveyed, Bows looked up, entirely puzzled. "But we will talk of these matters another time," the Major continued, perhaps not wishing to commit himself; "it is to Miss Fotheringay that I came to pay my respects to-day:" and he performed another bow for her, so courtly and gracious, that if she had been a duchess he could not have made it more handsome.

"I had heard of your performances from my nephew, madam," the Major said, "who raves about you, as I believe you know pretty well. But Arthur is but a boy, and a wild enthusiastic young fellow, whose opinions one must not take *au pied de la lettre;* and I confess I was anxious to judge for myself. Permit me to say your performance delighted and astonished me. I have seen our best actresses, and, on my word, I think you surpass them all. You are as majestic as Mrs. Siddons."

"Faith, I always said so," Costigan said, winking at his daughter: "Major, take a chair." Milly rose at this hint, took an unripped satin garment off the only vacant seat, and brought the latter to Major Pendennis with one of her finest curtseys.

"You are as pathetic as Miss O'Neill," he continued, bowing and seating himself; "your snatches of song remind me of Mrs. Jordan in her best time, when we were young men, Captain Costigan; and your

manner reminded me of Mars. Did you ever see the Mars, Miss Fotheringay?"

"There was two Mahers in Crow Street," remarked Miss Emily: "Fanny was well enough, but Biddy was no great things."

"Sure, the Major means the god of war, Milly, my dear," interposed the parent.

"It is not that Mars I meant, though Venus, I suppose, may be pardoned for thinking about him;" the Major replied with a smile directed in full to Sir Derby Oaks, who now re-entered in his shell-jacket; but the lady did not understand the words of which he made use, nor did the compliment at all pacify Sir Derby, who, probably, did not understand it either, and at any rate received it with great sulkiness and stiffness; scowling uneasily at Miss Fotheringay, with an expression which seemed to ask what the deuce does this man here?

Major Pendennis was not the least annoyed by the gentleman's ill-humour. On the contrary, it delighted him. "So," thought he, "a rival is in the field;" and he offered up vows that Sir Derby might be, not only a rival, but a winner too, in this love-match in which he and Pen were engaged.

"I fear I interrupted your fencing lesson; but my stay in Chatteris is very short, and I was anxious to make myself known to my old fellow-campaigner Captain Costigan, and to see a lady nearer who had charmed me so much from the stage. I was not the only man *épris* last night, Miss Fotheringay (if I must call you so, though your own family name is a very ancient and noble one). There was a reverend friend of mine, who went home in raptures with Ophelia; and I saw Sir Derby Oaks fling a bouquet which no actress ever merited better. I should have brought one myself, had I known what I was going to see. Are not those the very flowers in a glass of water on the mantel-piece yonder?"

"I am very fond of flowers," said Miss Fotheringay, with a languishing ogle at Sir Derby Oaks—but the Baronet still scowled sulkily.

"Sweets to the sweet—isn't that the expression of the play?" Major Pendennis asked, bent upon being good-humoured.

"'Pon my life, I don't know. Very likely it is. I ain't much of a literary man," answered Sir Derby.

"Is it possible?" the Major continued, with an air of surprise. "You don't inherit your father's love of letters, then, Sir Derby? He was a remarkably fine scholar, and I had the honour of knowing him very well."

"Indeed," said the other, and gave a sulky wag of his head.

"He saved my life," continued Pendennis.

"Did he now?" cried Miss Fotheringay, rolling her eyes first upon the Major with surprise, then towards Sir Derby with gratitude—but the latter was proof against those glances; and far from appearing to

be pleased that the Apothecary, his father, should have saved Major Pendennis's life, the young man actually looked as if he wished the event had turned the other way.

"My father, I believe, was a very good doctor," the young gentleman said by way of reply. "I'm not in that line myself. I wish you

good morning, sir. I've got an appointment—Cos, bye-bye—Miss Fotheringay, good morning." And, in spite of the young lady's imploring looks and appealing smiles, the Dragoon bowed stiffly out of the room, and the clatter of his sabre was heard as he strode down the creaking stair; and the angry tones of his voice as he cursed little Tom Creed, who was disporting in the passage, and whose peg-top Sir Derby kicked away with an oath into the street.

The Major did not smile in the least, though he had every reason to be amused. "Monstrous handsome young man that—as fine a looking soldier as ever I saw," he said to Costigan.

"A credit to the army and to human nature in general," answered Costigan. "A young man of refoined manners, polite affabilitee, and princely fortune. His table is sumptuous: he's adawr'd in the regiment: and he rides sixteen stone."

"A perfect champion," said the Major, laughing. "I have no doubt all the ladies admire him."

"He's very well, in spite of his weight, now he's young," said Milly; "but he's no conversation."

"He's best on horseback," Mr. Bows said; on which Milly replied, that the Baronet had ridden third in the steeple-chase on his horse Tareaways, and the Major began to comprehend that the young lady herself was not of a particular genius, and to wonder how she should be so stupid and act so well.

Costigan, with Irish hospitality, of course pressed refreshment upon his guest: and the Major, who was no more hungry than you are after a Lord Mayor's dinner, declared that he should like a biscuit and a glass of wine above all things, as he felt quite faint from long fasting—but he knew that to receive small kindnesses flatters the donors very much, and that people must needs grow well disposed towards you as they give you their hospitality.

"Some of the old Madara, Milly, love," Costigan said, winking to his child—and that lady, turning to her father a glance of intelligence, went out of the room, and down the stair, where she softly summoned her little emissary Master Tommy Creed: and giving him a piece of money, ordered him to go buy a pint of Madara wine at the Grapes, and sixpennyworth of sorted biscuits at the baker's, and to return in a hurry, when he might have two biscuits for himself.

Whilst Tommy Creed was gone on this errand, Miss Costigan sate below with Mrs. Creed, telling her landlady how Mr. Arthur Pendennis's uncle, the Major, was above stairs; a nice, soft-spoken old gentleman; that butter wouldn't melt in his mouth: and how Sir Derby had

gone out of the room in a rage of jealousy, and thinking what must be done to pacify both of them.

"She keeps the keys of the cellar, Major," said Mr. Costigan, as the girl left the room.

"Upon my word you have a very beautiful butler," answered Pendennis, gallantly, "and I don't wonder at the young fellows raving about her. When we were of their age, Captain Costigan, I think plainer women would have done our business."

"Faith, and ye may say that, sir—and lucky is the man who gets her. Ask me friend Bob Bows here whether Miss Fotheringay's moind is not even shuparior to her person, and whether she does not possess a cultiveated intellect, a refoined understanding, and an emiable disposition?"

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Bows, rather drily. "Here comes Hebe blushing from the cellar. Don't you think it is time to go to rehearsal, Miss Hebe? You will be fined if you are late"—and he gave the young lady a look, which intimated that they had much better leave the room and the two elders together.

At this order Miss Hebe took up her bonnet and shawl, looking uncommonly pretty, good-humoured, and smiling: and Bows gathered up his roll of papers, and hobbled across the room for his hat and cane.

"Must you go?" said the Major. "Can't you give us a few minutes more, Miss Fotheringay? Before you leave us, permit an old fellow to shake you by the hand, and believe that I am proud to have had the honour of making your acquaintance, and am most sincerely anxious to be your friend."

Miss Fotheringay made a low curtsey at the conclusion of this gallant speech, and the Major followed her retreating steps to the door, where he squeezed her hand with the kindest and most paternal pressure. Bows was puzzled with this exhibition of cordiality: "The lad's relatives can't be really wanting to marry him to her," he thought—and so they departed.

"Now for it," thought Major Pendennis; and as for Mr. Costigan he profited instantaneously by his daughter's absence to drink up the rest of the wine; and tossed off one bumper after another of the Madeira from the Grapes, with an eager shaking hand. The Major came up to the table, and took up his glass and drained it with a jovial smack. If it had been Lord Steyne's particular, and not public-house Cape, he could not have appeared to relish it more.

"Capital Madeira, Captain Costigan," he said. "Where do you

get it? I drink the health of that charming creature in a bumper. Faith, Captain, I don't wonder that the men are wild about her. I never saw such eyes in my life, or such a grand manner. I am sure she is as intellectual as she is beautiful; and I have no doubt she's as good as she is clever."

"A good girl, sir,—a good girl, sir," said the delighted father; "and I pledge a toast to her with all my heart. Shall I send to the—to the cellar for another pint? It's handy by. No? Well, indeed sir, ye may say she is a good girl, and the pride and glory of her father—honest old Jack Costigan. The man who gets her will have a jew'l to a wife, sir; and I drink his health, sir, and ye know who I mean, Major."

"I am not surprised at young or old falling in love with her," said the Major, "and frankly must tell you, that though I was very angry with my poor nephew Arthur, when I heard of the boy's passion—now I have seen the lady I can pardon him any extent of it. By George, I should like to enter for the race myself, if I weren't an old fellow and a poor one."

"And no better man, Major, I'm sure," cried Jack enraptured. "Your friendship, sir, delights me. Your admiration for my girl brings tears to me eyes—tears, sir—manlee tears—and when she leaves me humble home for your own more splendid mansion, I hope she'll keep a place for her poor old father, poor old Jack Costigan."—The Captain suited the action to the word, and his blood-shot eyes were suffused with water, as he addressed the Major.

"Your sentiments do you honour," the other said. "But, Captain Costigan, I can't help smiling at one thing you have just said."

"And what's that, sir?" asked Jack, who was at a too heroic and sentimental pitch to descend from it.

"You were speaking about our splendid mansion—my sister's house, I mean."

"I mane the park and mansion of Arthur Pendennis, Esquire, of Fairoaks Park, whom I hope to see a Mimber of Parliament for his native town of Clavering, when he is of ege to take that responsible stetion," cried the Captain with much dignity.

The Major smiled. "Fairoaks Park, my dear sir!" he said. "Do you know our history? We are of excessively ancient family certainly, but I began life with scarce enough money to purchase my commission, and my eldest brother was a country apothecary: who made every shilling he died possessed of out of his pestle and mortar."

"I have consented to waive that objection, sir," said Costigan

majestically, "in consideration of the known respectability of your family."

"Curse your impudence," thought the Major; but he only smiled and bowed.

"The Costigans, too, have met with misfortunes; and our house of Castle Costigan is by no manes what it was. I have known very honest men apothecaries, sir, and there's some in Dublin that has had the honour of dining at the Lord Leftenant's teeble."

"You are very kind to give us the benefit of your charity," the Major continued: "but permit me to say that is not the question. You spoke just now of my little nephew as heir of Fairoaks Park, and I don't know what besides."

"Funded property, I've no doubt, Meejor, and something handsome eventually from yourself."

"My good sir, I tell you the boy is the son of a country apothecary," cried out Major Pendennis; "and that when he comes of age he won't have a shilling."

"Pooh, Major, you're laughing at me," said Mr. Costigan; "me young friend, I make no doubt, is heir to two thousand pounds a-year."

"Two thousand fiddlesticks! I beg your pardon, my dear sir; but has the boy been humbugging you?—it is not his habit. Upon my word and honour, as a gentleman and an executor to my brother's will too, he left little more than five hundred a-year behind him."

"And with aconomy, a handsome sum of money too, sir," the Captain answered. "Faith, I've known a man drink his clar't, and drive his coach-and-four on five hundred a-year and strict aconomy, in Ireland, sir. We'll manage on it, sir—trust Jack Costigan for that."

"My dear Captain Costigan—I give you my word that my brother did not leave a shilling to his son Arthur."

"Are ye joking with me, Meejor Pendennis?" cried Jack Costigan. "Are ye thrifling with the feelings of a father and a gentleman?"

"I am telling you the honest truth," said Major Pendennis. "Every shilling my brother had, he left to his widow: with a partial reversion, it is true, to the boy. But she is a young woman, and may marry if he offends her—or she may outlive him, for she comes of an uncommonly long-lived family. And I ask you, as a gentleman and a man of the world, what allowance can my sister, Mrs. Pendennis, make to her son out of five hundred a-year, which is all her fortune—that shall enable him to maintain himself and your daughter in the rank befitting such an accomplished young lady?"

"Am I to understand, sir, that the young gentleman, your nephew, and whom I have fosthered and cherished as the son of me bosom, is an imposther who has been thrifling with the affections of me beloved child?" exclaimed the General, with an outbreak of wrath. "Have a care, sir, how you thrifle with the honour of John Costigan. If I thought any mortal man meant to do so, be heavens I'd have his blood, sir—were he old or young."

"Mr. Costigan!" cried out the Major.

"Mr. Costigan can protect his own and his daughter's honour, and will, sir," said the other. "Look at that chest of dthrawers, it contains heaps of letthers that that viper has addressed to that innocent child. There's promises there, sir, enough to fill a band-box with; and when I have dragged the scoundthrel before the Courts of Law, and shown up his perjury and his dishonour, I have another remedy in yondther mahogany case, sir, which shall set me right, sir, with any individual —ye mark me words, Major Pendennis—with any individual who has counselled your nephew to insult a soldier and a gentleman. What? Me daughter to be jilted, and me gray hairs dishonoured by an apothecary's son! By the laws of Heaven, sir, I should like to see the man that shall do it."

"I am to understand then that you threaten in the first place to publish the letters of a boy of eighteen to a woman of eight-and-twenty: and afterwards to do me the honour of calling me out?" the Major said, still with perfect coolness.

"You have described my intentions with perfect accuracy, Meejor Pendennis," answered the Captain, as he pulled his ragged whiskers over his chin.

"Well, well; these shall be the subjects of future arrangements, but before we come to powder and ball, my good sir,—do have the kindness to think with yourself in what earthly way I have injured you? I have told you that my nephew is dependent upon his mother, who has scarcely more than five hundred a-year."

"I have my own opinion of the correctness of that assertion," said the Captain.

"Will you go to my sister's lawyers, Messrs. Tatham here, and satisfy yourself?"

"I decline to meet those gentlemen," said the Captain, with rather a disturbed air. "If it be as you say, I have been athrociously deceived by some one, and on that person I'll be revenged."

"Is it my nephew?" cried the Major, starting up and putting on his hat. "Did he ever tell you that his property was two thousand a

year? If he did, I'm mistaken in the boy. To tell lies has not been a habit in our family, Mr. Costigan, and I don't think my brother's son has learned it as yet. Try and consider whether you have not deceived yourself; or adopted extravagant reports from hearsay. As for me, sir, you are at liberty to understand that I am not afraid of all the Costigans in Ireland, and know quite well how to defend myself against any threats from any quarter. I come here as the boy's guardian to protest against a marriage, most absurd and unequal, that cannot but bring poverty and misery with it: and in preventing it I conceive I am quite as much your daughter's friend (who I have no doubt is an honourable young lady), as the friend of my own family, and prevent the marriage I will, sir, by every means in my power There, I have said my say, sir."

"But I have not said mine, Major Pendennis—and ye shall hear more from me," Mr. Costigan said, with a look of tremendous severity.

"'Sdeath, sir, what do you mean?" the Major asked, turning round on the threshold of the door, and looking the intrepid Costigan in the face.

"Ye said, in the course of conversation, that ye were at the George Hotel, I think," Mr. Costigan said in a stately manner. "A friend shall wait upon ye there before ye leave town, sir."

"Let him make haste, Mr. Costigan," cried out the Major, almost beside himself with rage. "I wish you a good morning, sir." And Captain Costigan bowed a magnificent bow of defiance to Major Pendennis over the landing-place as the latter retreated down the stairs.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH A SHOOTING MATCH IS PROPOSED.

EARLY mention has been made in this history of Mr. Garbetts, Principal Tragedian, a promising and athletic young actor, of jovial habits and irregular inclinations, between whom and Mr. Costigan there was a considerable intimacy. They were the chief ornaments of the convivial club held at the Magpie Hotel; they helped each other in various bill transactions in which they had been engaged, with the mutual loan of each other's valuable signatures. They were friends, in fine; and Mr. Garbetts was called in by Captain Costigan immediately after Major Pendennis had quitted the house, as a friend proper to be consulted at the actual juncture. He was a large man, with a loud voice and fierce aspect, who had the finest legs of the whole company and could break a poker in mere sport across his stalwart arm.

"Run, Tommy," said Mr. Costigan to the little messenger, "and fetch Mr. Garbetts from his lodgings over the tripe shop, ye know, and tell 'em to send two glasses of whisky and water, hot, from the

Grapes." So Tommy went his way; and presently Mr. Garbetts and the whisky came.

Captain Costigan did not disclose to him the whole of the previous events, of which the reader is in possession; but, with the aid of the spirits and water, he composed a letter of a threatening nature to Major Pendennis's address, in which he called upon that gentleman to offer no hindrance to the marriage projected between Mr. Arthur Pendennis and his daughter, Miss Fotheringay, and to fix an early day for its celebration: or, in any other case, to give him the satisfaction which was usual between gentlemen of honour. And should Major Pendennis be disinclined to this alternative, the Captain hinted, that he would force him to accept it by the use of a horse-whip, which he should employ upon the Major's person. The precise terms of this letter we cannot give, for reasons which shall be specified presently; but it was, no doubt, couched in the Captain's finest style, and sealed elaborately with the great silver seal of the Costigans—the only bit of the family plate which the Captain possessed.

Garbetts was despatched, then, with this message and letter; and bidding Heaven bless 'um, the General squeezed his ambassador's hand, and saw him depart. Then he took down his venerable and murderous duelling-pistols, with flint locks, that had done the business of many a pretty fellow in Dublin: and having examined these, and seen that they were in a satisfactory condition, he brought from the drawer all Pen's letters and poems which he kept there, and which he always read before he permitted his Emily to enjoy their perusal.

In a score of minutes Garbetts came back with an anxious and crest-fallen countenance.

"Ye 've seen 'um?" the Captain said.

"Why, yes," said Garbetts.

"And when is it for?" asked Costigan, trying the lock of one of the ancient pistols, and bringing it to a level with his oi—as he called that blood-shot orb.

"When is what for?" asked Mr. Garbetts.

"The meeting, my dear fellow?"

"You don't mean to say you mean mortal combat, Captain?" Garbetts said, aghast.

"What the devil else do I mean, Garbetts?—I want to shoot that man that has trajuiced me honor, or meself dthrop a victim on the sod."

"D— if I carry challenges," Mr. Garbetts replied. "I'm a

family man, Captain, and will have nothing to do with pistols—take back your letter;" and, to the surprise and indignation of Captain Costigan, his emissary flung the letter down, with its great sprawling superscription and blotched seal.

"Ye don't mean to say ye saw 'um and didn't give 'um the letter?" cried out the Captain, in a fury.

"I saw him, but I could not have speech with him, Captain," said Mr. Garbetts.

"And why tne devil not?" asked the other.

"There was one there I cared not to meet, nor would you," the tragedian answered in a sepulchral voice. "The minion Tatham was there, Captain."

"The cowardly scoundthrel!" roared Costigan. "He's frightened, and already going to swear the peace against me."

"I'll have nothing to do with the fighting, mark that," the tragedian doggedly said, "and I wish I'd not seen Tatham neither, nor that bit of——"

"Hold your tongue! Bob Acres. It's my belief ye're no better than a coward," said Captain Costigan, quoting Sir Lucius O'Trigger, which character he had performed with credit, both off and on the stage, and after some more parley between the couple they separated in not very good humour.

Their colloquy has been here condensed, as the reader knows the main point upon which it turned. But the latter will now see how it is impossible to give a correct account of the letter which the Captain wrote to Major Pendennis, as it was never opened at all by that gentleman.

When Miss Costigan came home from rehearsal, which she did in the company of the faithful Mr. Bows, she found her father pacing up and down their apartment in a great state of agitation, and in the midst of a powerful odour of spirits and water, which, as it appeared, had not succeeded in pacifying his disordered mind. The Pendennis papers were on the table surrounding the empty goblets and now useless teaspoons, which had served to hold and mix the Captain's liquor and his friend's. As Emily entered he seized her in his arms, and cried out, "Prepare yourself, me child, me blessed child," in a voice of agony, and with eyes brimful of tears.

"Ye're tipsy again, Papa," Miss Fotheringay said, pushing back her sire. "Ye promised me ye wouldn't take spirits before dinner."

"It's to forget me sorrows, me poor girl, that I've taken just a

drop," cried the bereaved father—"it's to drown me care that I drain the bowl."

"Your care takes a deal of drowning, Captain dear," said Bows, mimicking his friend's accent; "what has happened? Has that soft-spoken gentleman in the wig been vexing you?"

"The oily miscreant! I'll have his blood!" roared Cos. Miss Milly, it must be premised, had fled to her room out of his embrace, and was taking off her bonnet and shawl there.

"I thought he meant mischief. He was so uncommon civil," the other said. "What has he come to say?"

"O Bows! He has overwhellum'd me," the Captain said. "There's a hellish conspiracy on foot against me poor girl; and it's me opinion that both them Pendennises, nephew and uncle, is two infernal thrators and scoundthrels, who should be conshumed from off the face of the earth."

"What is it? What has happened?" said Mr. Bows, growing rather excited.

Costigan then told him the Major's statement that the young Pendennis had not two thousand, nor two hundred pounds a-year; and expressed his fury that he should have permitted such an impostor to coax and wheedle his innocent girl, and that he should have nourished such a viper in his own personal bosom. "I have shaken the reptile from me, however," said Costigan; "and as for his uncle, I'll have such a revenge on that old man, as shall make 'um rue the day he ever insulted a Costigan."

"What do you mean, General?" said Bows.

"I mean to have his life, Bows—his villanous, skulking life, my boy;" and he rapped upon the battered old pistol-case in an ominous and savage manner. Bows had often heard him appeal to that box of death, with which he proposed to sacrifice his enemies; but the Captain did not tell him that he had actually written and sent a challenge to Major Pendennis, and Mr. Bows therefore rather disregarded the pistols in the present instance.

At this juncture Miss Fotheringay returned to the common sitting-room from her private apartment, looking perfectly healthy, happy, and unconcerned, a striking and wholesome contrast to her father, who was in a delirious tremor of grief, anger, and other agitation. She brought in a pair of ex-white satin shoes with her, which she proposed to rub as clean as might be with bread-crumb; intending to go mad with them upon next Tuesday evening in Ophelia, in which character she was to reappear on that night.

She looked at the papers on the table ; stopped as if she was going to ask a question, but thought better of it, and going to the cupboard, selected an eligible piece of bread wherewith she might operate on the satin slippers : and afterwards coming back to the table, seated herself there commodiously with the shoes, and then asked her father, in her honest Irish brogue, "What have ye got them letthers, and pothry, and stuff, of Master Arthur's out for, Pa? Sure ye don't want to be reading over that nonsense."

"O Emilee!" cried the Captain, "that boy whom I loved as the boy of mee bosom is only a scoundthrel, and a deceiver, mee poor girl:' and he looked in the most tragical way at Mr. Bows, opposite ; who, in his turn, gazed somewhat anxiously at Miss Costigan.

"He! pooh! Sure the poor lad's as simple as a schoolboy," she said. "All them children write verses and nonsense."

"He's been acting the part of a viper to this fireside, and a traitor in this familee," cried the Captain. "I tell ye he's no better than an impostor."

"What has the poor fellow done, Papa?" asked Emily.

"Done? He has deceived us in the most athrocious manner," Miss Emily's papa said. "He has thrifled with your affections, and outraged my own fine feelings. He has represented himself as a man of property, and it turruns out that he is no betther than a beggar. Haven't I often told ye he had two thousand a-year? He's a pauper, I tell ye, Miss Costigan ; a depindent upon the bountee of his mother; a good woman, who may marry again, who's likely to live for ever, and who has but five hundred a-year. How dar he ask ye to marry into a family which has not the means of providing for ye? Ye've been grossly deceived and put upon, Milly, and it's my belief his old ruffian of an uncle in a wig is in the plot against us."

"That soft old gentleman? What has he been doing, Papa?" continued Emily, still imperturbable.

Costigan informed Milly that when she was gone, Major Pendennis told him in his double-faced Pall Mall polite manner, that young Arthur had no fortune at all, that the Major had asked him (Costigan) to go to the lawyers ("wherein he knew the scoundthrels have a bill of mine, and I can't meet them," the Captain parenthetically remarked), and see the lad's father's will : and finally, that an infernal swindle had been practised upon him by the pair, and that he was resolved either on a marriage, or on the blood of both of them.

Milly looked very grave and thoughtful, rubbing the white satin

shoe. "Sure, if he's no money, there's no use marrying him, Papa," she said, sententiously.

"Why did the villain say he was a man of prawpertee?" asked Costigan.

"The poor fellow always said he was poor," answered the girl. "'Twas you who would have it he was rich, Papa—and made me agree to take him."

"He should have been explicit and told us his income, Milly," answered the father. "A young fellow who rides a blood mare, and makes presents of shawls and bracelets, is an impostor if he has no money;—and as for his uncle, bedad I'll pull off his wig whenever I see 'um. Bows, here, shall take a message to him and tell him so. Either it's a marriage, or he meets me in the field like a man, or I tweak 'um on the nose in front of his hotel or in the gravel walks of Fairoaks Park before all the county, bedad."

"Bedad, you may send somebody else with the message," said Bows, laughing. "I'm a fiddler, not a fighting man, Captain."

"Pooh, you've no spirit, sir," roared the General. "I'll be my own second, if no one will stand by and see me injured. And I'll take my case of pistols and shoot 'um in the Coffee Room of the George."

"And so poor Arthur has no money?" sighed out Miss Costigan, rather plaintively. "Poor lad, he was a good lad too: wild and talking nonsense, with his verses and pothry and that, but a brave, generous boy, and indeed I liked him—and he liked me too," she added, rather softly, and rubbing away at the shoe.

"Why don't you marry him if you like him so?" Mr. Bows said, rather savagely. "He is not more than ten years younger than you are. His mother may relent, and you might go and live and have enough at Fairoaks Park. Why not go and be a lady? I could go on with the fiddle, and the General live on his half-pay. Why don't you marry him? You know he likes you."

"There's others that likes me as well, Bows, that has no money and that's old enough," Miss Milly said sententiously.

"Yes, d—— it," said Bows, with a bitter curse—"that are old enough and poor enough and fools enough for anything."

"There's old fools, and young fools too. You've often said so, you silly man," the imperious beauty said, with a conscious glance at the old gentleman. "If Pendennis has not enough money to live upon, it's folly to talk about marrying him: and that's the long and short of it."

"And the boy?" said Mr. Bows. "By Jove! you throw a man away like an old glove, Miss Costigan."

"I don't know what you mean, Bows," said Miss Fotheringay, placidly, rubbing the second shoe. "If he had had half of the two thousand a-year that Papa gave him, or the half of that, I would marry him. But what is the good of taking on with a beggar? We're poor enough already. There's no use in my going to live with an old lady that's testy and cross, maybe, and would grudge me every morsel of meat. (Sure, it's near dinner time, and Suky not laid the cloth yet), and then," added Miss Costigan, quite simply, "suppose there was a family?—why, Papa, we shouldn't be as well off as we are now."

"'Deed then, you would not, Milly dear," answered the father.

"And there's an end to all the fine talk about Mrs. Arthur Pendennis of Fairoaks Park—the member of Parliament's lady," said Milly, with a laugh. "Pretty carriages and horses we should have to ride!—that you were always talking about, Papa. But it's always the same. If a man looked at me, you fancied he was going to marry me; and if he had a good coat, you fancied he was as rich as Crazes."

"As Crœsus," said Mr. Bows.

"Well, call 'um what ye like. But it's a fact now that Papa has married me these eight years a score of times. Wasn't I to be my Lady Poldoody of Oystherstown Castle? Then there was the Navy Captain at Portsmouth, and the old surgeon at Norwich, and the Methodist preacher here last year, and who knows how many more? Well, I bet a penny, with all your scheming, I shall die Milly Costigan at last. So poor little Arthur has no money? Stop and take dinner, Bows: we've a beautiful beef-steak pudding."

"I wonder whether she is on with Sir Derby Oaks," thought Bows, whose eyes and thoughts were always watching her. "The dodges of women beat all comprehension; and I am sure she wouldn't let the lad off so easily, if she had not some other scheme on hand."

It will have been perceived that Miss Fotheringay, though silent in general, and by no means brilliant as a conversationist where poetry, literature, or the fine arts were concerned, could talk freely and with good sense, too, in her own family circle. She cannot justly be called a romantic person: nor were her literary acquirements great: she never opened a Shakspeare from the day she left the stage, nor, indeed, understood it during all the time she adorned the boards: but about a pudding, a piece of needle-work, or her own domestic affairs,

she was as good a judge as could be found; and not being misled by a strong imagination or a passionate temper, was better enabled to keep her judgment cool. When, over their dinner, Costigan tried to convince himself and the company, that the Major's statement regarding Pen's finances were unworthy of credit, and a mere *ruse* upon the old hypocrite's part so as to induce them, on their side, to break off the match, Miss Milly would not, for a moment, admit the possibility of deceit on the side of the adversary: and pointed out clearly that it was her father who had deceived himself, and not poor little Pen, who had tried to take them in. As for that poor lad, she said she pitied him with all her heart. And she ate an exceedingly good dinner; to the admiration of Mr. Bows, who had a remarkable regard and contempt for this woman, during and after which repast, the party devised upon the best means of bringing this love-matter to a close. As for Costigan, his idea of tweaking the Major's nose vanished with his supply of after-dinner whisky-and-water; and he was submissive to his daughter, and ready for any plan on which she might decide, in order to meet the crisis which she saw was at hand.

The Captain, who, as long as he had a notion that he was wronged, was eager to face and demolish both Pen and his uncle, perhaps shrank from the idea of meeting the former, and asked "what the juice they were to say to the lad if he remained steady to his engagement, and they broke from theirs?" "What? don't you know how to throw a man over?" said Bows; "ask a woman to tell you;" and Miss Fotheringay showed how this feat was to be done simply enough—nothing was more easy. "Papa writes to Arthur to know what settlements he proposes to make in event of a marriage; and asks what his means are. Arthur writes back and says what he's got, and you'll find it's as the Major says, I'll go bail. Then Papa writes, and says it's not enough, and the match had best be at an end."

"And, of course, you enclose a parting line, in which you say you will always regard him as a brother;" said Mr. Bows, eyeing her in his scornful way.

"Of course, and so I shall," answered Miss Fotheringay. "He's a most worthy young man, I'm sure. I'll thank ye hand me the salt. Them filberts is beautiful."

"And there will be no noses pulled, Cos, my boy? I'm sorry you're balked," said Mr. Bows.

"'Dad, I suppose not," said Cos, rubbing his own.—"What'll ye do about them letters, and verses, and pomes, Milly, darling?—Ye must send 'em back."

"Wigsby would give a hundred pound for 'em," Bows said, with a sneer.

"'Deed, then, he would," said Captain Costigan, who was easily led.

"Papa!" said Miss Milly.—"Ye wouldn't be for not sending the poor boy his letters back? Them letters and pomes is mine. They were very long, and full of all sorts of nonsense, and Latin, and things I couldn't understand the half of; indeed I've not read 'em all; but we'll send 'em back to him when the proper time comes." And going to a drawer, Miss Fotheringay took out from it a number of the County Chronicle and Chatteris Champion, in which Pen had written a copy of flaming verses celebrating her appearance in the character of Imogen, and putting by the leaf upon which the poem appeared (for, like ladies of her profession, she kept the favourable printed notices of her performances), she wrapped up Pen's letters, poems, passions, and fancies, and tied them with a piece of string neatly, as she would a parcel of sugar.

Nor was she in the least moved while performing this act. What hours the boy had passed over those papers! What love and longing: what generous faith and manly devotion—what watchful nights and lonely fevers might they tell of! She tied them up like so much grocery, and sate down and made tea afterwards with a perfectly placid and contented heart: while Pen was yearning after her ten miles off: and hugging her image to his soul.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CRISIS.

MAJOR PENDENNIS came away from his interview with Captain Costigan in a state of such concentrated fury as rendered him terrible to approach. "The impudent bog-trotting scamp," he thought, "dare to threaten *me!* Dare to talk of permitting his damned Costigans to marry with the Pendennises! Send me a challenge! If the fellow can get anything in the shape of a gentleman to carry it, I have the greatest mind in life not to balk him.—Psha! what would people say if I were to go out with a tipsy mountebank, about a row with an actress in a barn!" So when the Major saw Dr. Portman, who asked anxiously regarding the issue of his battle with the dragon, Mr. Pendennis did not care to inform the divine of the General's insolent behaviour, but stated that the affair was a very ugly and disagreeable one, and that it was by no means over yet.

He enjoined Doctor and Mrs. Portman to say nothing about the business at Fairoaks; and then he returned to his hotel, where he vented his wrath upon Mr. Morgan his valet, "dammin and cussin up *stairs* and down stairs," as that gentleman observed to Mr. Foker's

man, in whose company he partook of dinner in the servants' room of the George.

The servant carried the news to his máster; and Mr. Foker having finished his breakfast about this time, it being two o'clock in the afternoon, remembered that he was anxious to know the result of the interview between his two friends, and having inquired the number of the Major's sitting-room, went over in his brocade dressing-gown, and knocked for admission.

The Major had some business, as he had stated, respecting a lease of the widow's, about which he was desirous of consulting old Mr. Tatham, the lawyer, who had been his brother's man of business, and who had a branch-office at Clavering, where he and his son attended market and other days three or four in the week. This gentleman and his client were now in consultation when Mr. Foker showed his grand dressing-gown and embroidered skull-cap at Major Pendennis's door.

Seeing the Major engaged with papers and red-tape, and an old man with a white head, the modest youth was for drawing back—and said, "Oh, you're busy—call again another time." But Mr. Pendennis wanted to see him, and begged him, with a smile, to enter: whereupon Mr. Foker took off the embroidered tarboosh or fez (it had been worked by the fondest of mothers) and advanced, bowing to the gentlemen and smiling on them graciously. Mr. Tatham had never seen so splendid an apparition before as this brocaded youth, who seated himself in an arm-chair, spreading out his crimson skirts, and looking with exceeding kindness and frankness on the other two tenants of the room. "You seem to like my dressing-gown, sir," he said to Mr. Tatham. "A pretty thing, isn't it? Neat, but not in the least gaudy. And how do *you* do? Major Pendennis, sir, and how does the world treat you?"

There was that in Foker's manner and appearance which would have put an Inquisitor into good humour, and it smoothed the wrinkles under Pendennis's head of hair.

"I have had an interview with that Irishman, (you may speak before my friend, Mr. Tatham here, who knows all the affairs of the family,) and it has not, I own, been very satisfactory. He won't believe that my nephew is poor: he says we are both liars: he did me the honour to hint that I was a coward, as I took leave. And I thought when you knocked at the door, that you might be the gentleman whom I expect with a challenge from Mr. Costigan—that is how the world treats me, Mr. Foker."

"You don't mean that Irishman, the actress's father?" cried Mr. Tatham, who was a dissenter himself, and did not patronise the drama.

"That Irishman, the actress's father—the very man. Have not you heard what a fool my nephew has made of himself about the girl?" —and Major Pendennis had to recount the story of his nephew's loves to the lawyer, Mr. Foker coming in with appropriate comments in his usual familiar language.

Tatham was lost in wonder at the narrative. Why had not Mrs. Pendennis married a serious man, he thought—Mr. Tatham was a widower—and kept this unfortunate boy from perdition? As for Miss Costigan, he would say nothing: her profession was sufficient to characterise *her*. Mr. Foker here interposed to say he had known some uncommon good people in the booths, as he called the Temple of the Muses. Well it might be so, Mr. Tatham hoped so—but the father, Tatham knew personally—a man of the worst character, a wine-bibber and an idler in taverns and billiard-rooms, and a notorious insolvent. "I can understand the reason, Major," he said, "why the fellow would not come to my office to ascertain the truth of the statements which you made him.—We have a writ out against him and another disreputable fellow, one of the play-actors, for a bill given to Mr. Skinner of this city, a most respectable Grocer and Wine and Spirit Merchant, and a Member of the Society of Friends. This Costigan came crying to Mr. Skinner,—crying in the shop, sir,—and we have not proceeded against him or the other, as neither were worth powder and shot."

It was whilst Mr. Tatham was engaged in telling his story that a third knock came to the door, and there entered an athletic gentleman in a shabby braided frock, bearing in his hand a letter with a large blotched red seal.

"Can I have the honour of speaking with Major Pendennis in private?" he began—"I have a few words for your ear, sir. I am the bearer of a mission from my friend Captain Costigan,"—but here the man with the bass voice paused, faltered, and turned pale—he caught sight of the red and well-remembered face of Mr. Tatham.

"Hullo, Garbetts, speak up!" cried Mr. Foker, delighted.

"Why, bless my soul, it is the other party to the bill!" said Mr. Tatham. "I say, sir; stop I say." But Garbetts, with a face as blank as Macbeth's when Banquo's ghost appears upon him, gasped some inarticulate words, and fled out of the room.

The Major's gravity was entirely upset, and he burst out laughing.

So did Mr. Foker, who said, "By Jove, it was a good 'un." So did the attorney, although by profession a serious man.

"I don't think there'll be any fight, Major," young Foker said; and began mimicking the tragedian. "If there is, the old gentleman—your name Tatham?—very happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Tatham—may send the bailiffs to separate the men;" and Mr. Tatham promised to do so. The Major was by no means sorry at the ludicrous issue of the quarrel. 'It seems to me, sir," he said to Mr. Foker, "that you always arrive to put me into good humour."

Nor was this the only occasion on which Mr. Foker this day was destined to be of service to the Pendennis family. We have said that he had the *entrée* of Captain Costigan's lodgings, and in the course of the afternoon he thought he would pay the General a visit, and hear from his own lips what had occurred in the conversation, in the morning, with Mr. Pendennis. Captain Costigan was not at home. He had received permission, nay, encouragement from his daughter, to go to the convivial club at the Magpie Hotel, where no doubt he was bragging at that moment of his desire to murder a certain ruffian; for he was not only brave, but he knew it too, and liked to take out his courage, and, as it were, give it an airing in company.

Costigan then was absent, but Miss Fotheringay was at home washing the tea-cups whilst Mr. Bows sate opposite to her.

"Just done breakfast I see—how do?" said Mr. Foker, popping in his little funny head.

"Get out, you funny little man," cried Miss Fotheringay.

"You mean come in," answered the other.—"Here we are!" and entering the room he folded his arms and began twirling his head round and round with immense rapidity, like Harlequin in the Pantomime when he first issues from his cocoon or envelope. Miss Fotheringay laughed with all her heart: a wink of Foker's would set her off laughing, when the bitterest joke Bows ever made could not get a smile from her, or the finest of poor Pen's speeches would only puzzle her. At the end of the harlequinade he sank down on one knee and kissed her hand.

"You're the drollest little man," she said, and gave him a great good-humoured slap. Pen used to tremble as he kissed her hand. Pen would have died of a slap.

These preliminaries over, the three began to talk; Mr. Foker amused his companions by recounting to them the scene which he

had just witnessed of the discomfiture of Mr. Garbetts, by which they learned, for the first time, how far the General had carried his wrath against Major Pendennis. Foker spoke strongly in favour of the Major's character for veracity and honour, and described him as a tip-top swell, moving in the upper circle of society, who would never submit to any deceit—much more to deceive such a charming young woman as Miss Foth.

He touched delicately upon the delicate marriage question, though he couldn't help showing that he held Pen rather cheap. In fact, he had a perhaps just contempt for Mr. Pen's high-flown sentimentality; his own weakness, as he thought, not lying that way. "I knew it wouldn't do, Miss Foth," said he nodding his little head. "Couldn't do. Didn't like to put *my* hand into the bag, but knew it couldn't do. He's too young for you: too green: a deal too green: and he turns out to be poor as Job. Can't have him at no price, can she, Mr. Bo?"

"Indeed he's a nice poor boy," said the Fotheringay rather sadly.

"Poor little beggar," said Bows, with his hands in his pockets, and stealing up a queer look at Miss Fotheringay. Perhaps he thought and wondered at the way in which women play with men, and coax them and win them and drop them.

But Mr. Bows had not the least objection to acknowledge that he thought Miss Fotheringay was perfectly right in giving up Mr. Arthur Pendennis, and that in his idea the match was always an absurd one: and Miss Costigan owned that she thought so herself, only she couldn't send away two thousand a-year. "It all comes of believing Papa's silly stories," she said; "faith, I'll choose for meself another time"—and very likely the large image of Lieutenant Sir Derby Oaks entered into her mind at that instant.

After praising Major Pendennis, whom Miss Costigan declared to be a proper gentleman entirely, smelling of lavender, and as neat as a pin,—and who was pronounced by Mr. Bows to be the right sort of fellow, though rather too much of an old buck, Mr. Foker suddenly bethought him to ask the pair to come and meet the Major that very evening at dinner at his apartment at the George. "He agreed to dine with me, and I think after the—after the little shindy this morning, in which I must say the General was wrong, it would look kind, you know.—I know the Major fell in love with you, Miss Foth: he said so."

"So she may be Mrs. Pendennis still," Bows said with a sneer—"No thank you, Mr. F.—I've dined."

"Sure, that was at three o'clock," said Miss Costigan, who had an honest appetite, "and I can't go without you."

"We'll have lobster-salad and Champagne," said the little monster, who could not construe a line of Latin, or do a sum beyond the Rule of Three. Now, for lobster-salad and Champagne in an honourable manner, Miss Costigan would have gone anywhere—and Major Pendennis actually found himself at seven o'clock, seated at a dinner-table in company with Mr. Bows, a professional fiddler, and Miss Costigan, whose father had wanted to blow his brains out a few hours before.

To make the happy meeting complete, Mr. Foker, who knew Costigan's haunts, despatched Stoopid to the club at the Magpie, where the General was in the act of singing a pathetic song, and brought him off to supper. To find his daughter and Bows seated at the board was a surprise indeed—Major Pendennis laughed, and cordially held out his hand, which the General Officer grasped *avec effusion* as the French say. In fact he was considerably inebriated, and had already been crying over his own song before he joined the little party at the George. He burst into tears more than once during the entertainment, and called the Major his dearest friend. Stoopid and Mr. Foker walked home with him: the Major gallantly giving his arm to Miss Costigan. He was received with great friendliness when he called the next day, when many civilities passed between the gentlemen. On taking leave he expressed his anxious desire to serve Miss Costigan on any occasion in which he could be useful to her, and he shook hands with Mr. Foker most cordially and gratefully, and said that gentleman had done him the very greatest service.

"All right," said Mr. Foker: and they parted with mutual esteem.

On his return to Fairoaks the next day, Major Pendennis did not say what had happened to him on the previous night, or allude to the company in which he had passed it. But he engaged Mr. Smirke to stop to dinner; and any person accustomed to watch his manner might have remarked that there was something constrained in his hilarity and talkativeness, and that he was unusually gracious and watchful in his communications with his nephew. He gave Pen an emphatic God-bless-you when the lad went to bed; and as they were about to part for the night, he seemed as if he were going to say something to Mrs. Pendennis, but he bethought him that if he spoke he might spoil her night's rest, and allowed her to sleep in peace.

The next morning he was down in the breakfast-room earlier than was his custom, and saluted everybody there with great cor-

diality. The post used to arrive commonly about the end of this meal. When John, the old servant, entered, and discharged the bag of its letters and papers, the Major looked hard at Pen as the lad got his—Arthur blushed, and put his letter down. He knew the hand, it was that of old Costigan, and he did not care to read it in public. Major Pendennis knew the letter, too. He had put it into the post himself in Chatteris the day before.

He told little Laura to go away, which the child did, having a thorough dislike to him; and as the door closed on her, he took Mrs. Pendennis's hand, and giving her a look full of meaning, pointed to the letter under the newspaper which Pen was pretending to read. "Will you come into the drawing-room?" he said. "I want to speak to you."

And she followed him, wondering, into the hall.

"What is it?" she said nervously.

"The affair is at an end," Major Pendennis said. "He has a letter there giving him his dismissal. I dictated it myself yesterday. There are a few lines from the lady, too, bidding him farewell. It is all over."

Helen ran back to the dining-room, her brother following. Pen had jumped at his letter the instant they were gone. He was reading it with a stupefied face. It stated what the Major had said, that Mr. Costigan was most gratified for the kindness with which Arthur had treated his daughter, but that he was only now made aware of Mr. Pendennis's pecuniary circumstances. They were such that marriage was at present out of the question, and considering the great disparity in the age of the two, a future union was impossible. Under these circumstances, and with the deepest regret and esteem for him, Mr. Costigan bade Arthur farewell, and suggested that he should cease visiting, for some time at least, at his house.

A few lines from Miss Costigan were inclosed. She acquiesced in the decision of her Papa. She pointed out that she was many years older than Arthur, and that an engagement was not to be thought of. She would always be grateful for his kindness to her, and hoped to keep his friendship. But at present, and until the pain of the separation should be over, she entreated they should not meet.

Pen read Costigan's letter and its inclosure mechanically, hardly knowing what was before his eyes. He looked up wildly, and saw his mother and uncle regarding him with sad faces. Helen's, indeed, was full of tender maternal anxiety.

"What—what is this?" Pen said. "It's some joke. This is not

her writing. This is some servant's writing. Who's playing these tricks upon me?"

"It comes under her father's envelope," the Major said. "Those letters you had before were not in her hand: that is hers."

"How do you know?" said Pen very fiercely.

"I saw her write it," the uncle answered, as the boy started up; and his mother, coming forward, took his hand. He put her away.

"How came you to see her? How came you between me and her? What have I ever done to you that you should—Oh, it's not true; it's not true!"—Pen broke out with a wild execration. "She can't have done it of her own accord. She can't mean it. She's pledged to me. Who has told her lies to break her from me?"

"Lies are not told in the family, Arthur," Major Pendennis replied. "I told her the truth, which was, that you had no money to maintain her, for her foolish father had represented you to be rich. And when she knew how poor you were, she withdrew at once, and without any persuasion of mine. She was quite right. She is ten years older than you are. She is perfectly unfitted to be your wife, and knows it. Look at that handwriting, and ask yourself, is such a woman fitted to be the companion of your mother?"

"I will know from herself if it is true," Arthur said, crumpling up the paper.

"Won't you take my word of honour? Her letters were written by a confidante of hers, who writes better than she can—look here. Here's one from the lady to your friend, Mr. Foker. You have seen her with Miss Costigan, as whose amanuensis she acted"—the Major said, with ever so little of a sneer, and laid down a certain billet which Mr. Foker had given to him.

"It's not that," said Pen, burning with shame and rage. "I suppose what you say is true, sir, but I'll hear it from herself."

"Arthur!" appealed his mother.

"I *will* see her," said Arthur. "I'll ask her to marry me, once more. I will. No one shall prevent me."

"What, a woman who spells affection with one f? Nonsense, sir. Be a man, and remember that your mother is a lady. She was never made to associate with that tipsy old swindler or his daughter. Be a man and forget her, as she does you."

"Be a man and comfort your mother, my Arthur," Helen said, going and embracing him: and seeing that the pair were greatly moved, Major Pendennis went out of the room and shut the door upon them, wisely judging that they were best alone.

He had won a complete victory. He actually had brought away Pen's letters in his portmanteau from Chatteris: having complimented Mr. Costigan, when he returned them, by giving him the little promissory note which had disquieted himself and Mr. Garbetts: and for which the Major settled with Mr. Tatham.

Pen rushed wildly off to Chatteris that day, but in vain attempted to see Miss Fotheringay, for whom he left a letter, inclosed to her father. The inclosure was returned by Mr. Costigan, who begged that all correspondence might end; and after one or two further attempts of the lad's, the indignant General desired that their acquaintance might cease. He cut Pen in the street. As Arthur and Foker were pacing the Castle walk, one day, they came upon Emily on her father's arm. She passed without any nod of recognition. Foker felt poor Pen trembling on his arm.

His uncle wanted him to travel, to quit the country for a while, and his mother urged him too: for he was growing very ill, and suffered severely. But he refused, and said point-blank he would not go. He would not obey in this instance: and his mother was too fond, and his uncle too wise to force him. Whenever Miss Fotheringay acted, he rode over to the Chatteris Theatre and saw her. One night there were so few people in the house that the Manager returned the money. Pen came home and went to bed at eight o'clock and had a fever. If this continues, his mother will be going over and fetching the girl, the Major thought, in despair. As for Pen, he thought he should die. We are not going to describe his feelings, or give a dreary journal of his despair and passion. Have not other gentlemen been balked in love besides Mr. Pen? Yes, indeed: but few die of the malady.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH MISS FOTHERINGAY MAKES A NEW ENGAGEMENT.

WITHIN a short period of the events above narrated, Mr. Manager Bingley was performing his famous character of Rolla, in "Pizarro," to a house so exceedingly thin, that it would appear as if the part of Rolla was by no means such a favourite with the people of Chatteris as it was with the accomplished actor himself. Scarce anybody was in the theatre. Poor Pen had the boxes almost all to himself, and sate there lonely, with blood-shot eyes, leaning over the ledge, and gazing haggardly towards the scene, when Cora came in. When she was not on the stage he saw nothing. Spaniards and Peruvians, processions and battles, priests and virgins of the sun, went in and out, and had their talk, but Arthur took no note of any one of them; and only saw Cora whom his soul longed after. He said afterwards that he wondered he had not taken a pistol to shoot her, so mad was he with love, and rage, and despair; and had it not been for his mother at home, to whom he did not speak about his luckless condition, but whose silent sympathy and watchfulness greatly comforted the simple half heart-broken fellow, who knows but he might have done something desperate, and have ended his

days prematurely in front of Chatteris gaol? There he sate then, miserable, and gazing at her. And she took no more notice of him than he did of the rest of the house.

The Fotheringay was uncommonly handsome, in a white raiment and leopard skin, with a sun upon her breast, and fine tawdry bracelets on her beautiful glancing arms. She spouted to admiration the few words of her part, and looked it still better. The eyes, which had overthrown Pen's soul, rolled and gleamed as lustrous as ever; but it was not to him that they were directed that night. He did not know to whom, or remark a couple of gentlemen, in the box next to him, upon whom Miss Fotheringay's glances were perpetually shining.

Nor had Pen noticed the extraordinary change which had taken place on the stage a short time after the entry of these two gentlemen into the theatre. There were so few people in the house, that the first act of the play languished entirely, and there had been some question of returning the money, as upon that other unfortunate night when poor Pen had been driven away. The actors were perfectly careless about their parts, and yawned through the dialogue, and talked loud to each other in the intervals. Even Bingley was listless, and Mrs. B. in Elvira spoke under her breath.

How came it that all of a sudden Mrs. Bingley began to raise her voice and bellow like a bull of Bashan? Whence was it that Bingley, flinging off his apathy, darted about the stage and yelled like Kean? Why did Garbetts and Rowkins and Miss Rouncy try, each of them, the force of their charms or graces, and act and swagger and scowl and spout their very loudest at the two gentlemen in box No. 3?

One was a quiet little man in black, with a grey head and a jolly shrewd face—the other was in all respects a splendid and remarkable individual. He was a tall and portly gentleman with a hooked nose and a profusion of curling brown hair and whiskers; his coat was covered with the richest frogs, braiding, and velvet. He had underwaistcoats, many splendid rings, jewelled pins and neck-chains. When he took out his yellow pocket-handkerchief with his hand that was cased in white kids, a delightful odour of musk and bergamot was shaken through the house. He was evidently a personage of rank, and it was at him that the little Chatteris company was acting.

He was, in a word, no other than Mr. Dolphin, the great manager from London, accompanied by his faithful friend and secretary Mr. William Minns: without whom he never travelled. He had not been ten minutes in the theatre before his august presence there was per-

ceived by Bingley and the rest: and they all began to act their best and try to engage his attention. Even Miss Fotheringay's dull heart, which was disturbed at nothing, felt perhaps a flutter, when she came in presence of the famous London Impresario. She had not much to do in her part, but to look handsome, and stand in picturesque attitudes encircling her child: and she did this work to admiration. In vain the various actors tried to win the favour of the great stage Sultan. Pizarro never got a hand from him. Bingley yelled, and Mrs. Bingley bellowed, and the manager only took snuff out of his great gold box. It was only in the last scene, when Rolla comes in staggering with the infant (Bingley is not so strong as he was, and his fourth son Master Talma Bingley is a monstrous large child for his age)—when Rolla comes staggering with the child to Cora, who rushes forward with a shriek and says—"O God, there's blood upon him!"—that the London manager clapped his hands, and broke out with an enthusiastic bravo.

Then having concluded his applause, Mr. Dolphin gave his secretary a slap on the shoulder, and said "By Jove, Billy, she'll do!"

"Who taught her that dodge?" said old Billy, who was a sardonic old gentleman—"I remember her at the Olympic, and hang me if she could say Bo to a goose."

It was little Mr. Bows in the orchestra who had taught her the "dodge" in question. All the company heard the applause, and, as the curtain went down, came round her and congratulated and hated Miss Fotheringay.

Now Mr. Dolphin's appearance in the remote little Chatteris theatre may be accounted for in this manner. In spite of all his exertions, and the perpetual blazes of triumph, coruscations of talent, victories of good old English comedy, which his play-bills advertised, his theatre (which, if you please, and to injure no present susceptibilities and vested interests, we shall call the Museum Theatre) by no means prospered, and the famous Impresario found himself on the verge of ruin. The great Hubbard had acted legitimate drama for twenty nights, and failed to remunerate anybody but himself: the celebrated Mr. and Mrs. Cawdor had come out in Mr. Rawhead's tragedy, and in their favourite round of pieces, and had not attracted the public. Herr Garbage's lions and tigers had drawn for a little time, until one of the animals had bitten a piece out of the Herr's shoulder; when the Lord Chamberlain interfered, and put a stop to this species of performance: and the grand Lyrical Drama, though brought out with unexampled splendour and success, with Monsieur

Poumons as first tenor, and an enormous orchestra, had almost crushed poor Dolphin in its triumphant progress: so that great as his genius and resources were, they seemed to be at an end. He was dragging on his season wretchedly with half salaries, small operas, feeble old comedies, and his ballet company; and everybody was looking out for the day when he should appear in the Gazette.

One of the illustrious patrons of the Museum Theatre, and occupant of the great proscenium-box, was a gentleman whose name has been mentioned in a previous history; that refined patron of the arts, and enlightened lover of music and the drama, the Most Noble the Marquis of Steyne. His lordship's avocations as a statesman prevented him from attending the playhouse very often, or coming very early. But he occasionally appeared at the theatre in time for the ballet, and was always received with the greatest respect by the Manager, from whom he sometimes condescended to receive a visit in his box. It communicated with the stage, and when anything occurred there which particularly pleased him, when a new face made its appearance among the coryphées, or a fair dancer executed a *pas* with especial grace or agility, Mr. Wenham, Mr. Wagg, or some other aide-de-camp of the noble Marquis, would be commissioned to go behind the scenes and express the great man's approbation, or make the inquiries which were prompted by his lordship's curiosity, or his interest in the dramatic art. He could not be seen by the audience, for Lord Steyne sate modestly behind a curtain, and looked only towards the stage—but you could know he was in the house, by the glances which all the corps-de-ballet, and all the principal dancers, cast towards his box. I have seen many scores of pairs of eyes (as in the Palm Dance in the ballet of Cook at Otaheite, where no less than a hundred-and-twenty lovely female savages in palm leaves and feather aprons, were made to dance round Floridar as Captain Cook), ogling that box as they performed before it, and have often wondered to remark the presence of mind of Mademoiselle Sauterelle, or Mademoiselle de Bondi (known as la petite Caoutchouc), who, when actually up in the air quivering like so many shuttlecocks, always kept their lovely eyes winking at that box in which the great Steyne sate. Now and then you would hear a harsh voice from behind the curtain, cry, "Brava, Brava," or a pair of white gloves wave from it, and begin to applaud. Bondi, or Sauterelle, when they came down to earth, curtsied and smiled, especially to those hands, before they walked up the stage again, panting and happy.

One night this great Prince surrounded by a few choice friends

was in his box at the Museum, and they were making such a noise and laughter that the pit was scandalised, and many indignant voices were bawling out silence so loudly, that Wagg wondered the police did not interfere to take the rascals out. Wenham was amusing the party in the box with extracts from a private letter which he had received from Major Pendennis, whose absence in the country at the full London season had been remarked, and of course deplored by his friends.

"The secret is out," said Mr. Wenham, "there's a woman in the case."

"Why, d—— it, Wenham, he's your age," said the gentleman behind the curtain.

"Pour les âmes bien nées, l'amour ne compte pas le nombre des années," said Mr. Wenham, with a gallant air. "For my part, I hope to be a victim till I die, and to break my heart every year of my life." The meaning of which sentence was, "My lord, you need not talk; I'm three years younger than you, and twice as well *conservé*."

"Wenham, you affect me," said the great man, with one of his usual oaths. "By —— you do. I like to see a fellow preserving all the illusions of youth up to our time of life—and keeping his heart warm as yours is. Hang it, sir,—it's a comfort to meet with such a generous, candid creature.—Who's that gal in the second row, with blue ribbons, third from the stage—fine gal. Yes, you and I are sentimentalists. Wagg I don't think so much cares—it's the stomach rather more than the heart with you, eh, Wagg, my boy?"

"I like everything that's good," said Mr. Wagg, generously. "Beauty and Burgundy, Venus and Venison. I don't say that Venus's turtles are to be despised, because they don't cook them at the London Tavern: but—but tell us about old Pendennis, Mr. Wenham," he abruptly concluded—for his joke flagged just then, as he saw that his patron was not listening. In fact, Steyne's glasses were up, and he was examining some object on the stage.

"Yes, I've heard that joke about Venus's turtle and the London Tavern before—you begin to fail, my poor Wagg. If you don't mind I shall be obliged to have a new Jester," Lord Steyne said, laying down his glass. "Go on, Wenham, about old Pendennis."

"Dear Wenham,—he begins," Mr. Wenham read,—"as you have had my character in your hands for the last three weeks, and no doubt have torn me to shreds, according to your custom, I think you can afford to be good-humoured by way of variety, and to do me a service. It is a delicate matter, *entre nous, une affaire de cœur*. There

is a young friend of mine who is gone wild about a certain Miss Fotheringay, an actress at the theatre here, and I must own to you, as handsome a woman, and, as it appears to me, as good an actress as ever put on rouge. She does Ophelia, Lady Teazle, Mrs. Haller—that sort of thing. Upon my word, she is as splendid as Georges in her best days, and, as far as I know, utterly superior to anything we have on our scene. *I want a London engagement for her.* Can't you get your friend Dolphin to come and see her—to engage her—to take her out of this place? A word from a noble friend of ours (you understand) would be invaluable, and if you could get the Gaunt House interest for me—I will promise *anything* I can in return for your service—which I shall consider one of the greatest *that can be done to me.* Do, do this now as a good fellow, which *I always said you were*: and in return, command yours truly,

A. PENDENNIS."

"It's a clear case," said Mr. Wenham, having read this letter; "old Pendennis is in love."

"And wants to get the woman up to London—evidently," continued Mr. Wagg.

"I should like to see Pendennis on his knees, with the rheumatism," said Mr. Wenham.

"Or accommodating the beloved object with a lock of his hair," said Wagg.

"Stuff," said the great man. "He has relations in the county, hasn't he? He said something about a nephew, whose interest could return a member. It is the nephew's affair, depend on it. The young one is in a scrape. I was myself—when I was in the fifth form at Eton—a market-gardener's daughter—and swore I'd marry her. I was mad about her—poor Polly!"—Here he made a pause, and perhaps the past rose up to Lord Steyne, and George Gaunt was a boy again not altogether lost.—"But I say, she must be a fine woman from Pendennis's account. Have in Dolphin, and let us hear if he knows anything of her."

At this Wenham sprang out of the box, passed the servitor who waited at the door communicating with the stage, and who saluted Mr. Wenham with profound respect; and the latter emissary, pushing on and familiar with the place, had no difficulty in finding out the manager, who was employed, as he not unfrequently was, in swearing and cursing the ladies of the corps-de-ballet for not doing their duty.

The oaths died away on Mr. Dolphin's lips, as soon as he saw Mr.

Wenham; and he drew off the hand which was clenched in the face of one of the offending Coryphées, to grasp that of the new comer.

"How do, Mr. Wenham? How's his lordship to-night? Looks uncommonly well," said the manager smiling, as if he had never been out of temper in his life; and he was only too delighted to follow

Lord Steyne's ambassador, and pay his personal respects to that great man.

The visit to Chatteris was the result of their conversation: and Mr. Dolphin wrote to his Lordship from that place, and did himself the honour to inform the Marquis of Steyne, that he had seen the lady about whom his Lordship had spoken, that he was as much struck by her talents as he was by her personal appearance, and that he had made an engagement with Miss Fotheringay, who would soon have the honour of appearing before a London audience, and his noble and enlightened patron the Marquis of Steyne.

Pen read the announcement of Miss Fotheringay's engagement in the Chatteris paper, where he had so often praised her charms. The Editor made very handsome mention of her talent and beauty, and prophesied her success in the metropolis. Bingley, the manager, began to advertise "The last night of Miss Fotheringay's engagement." Poor Pen and Sir Derby Oaks were very constant at the play: Sir Derby in the stage-box, throwing bouquets and getting glances.—Pen in the almost deserted boxes, haggard, wretched, and lonely. Nobody cared whether Miss Fotheringay was going or staying except those two—and perhaps one more, which was Mr. Bows of the orchestra.

He came out of his place one night, and went into the house to the box where Pen was; and he held out his hand to him, and asked him to come and walk. They walked down the street together; and went and sate upon Chatteris bridge in the moonlight, and talked about *Her*. "We may sit on the same bridge," said he: "we have been in the same boat for a long time. You are not the only man who has made a fool of himself about that woman. And I have less excuse than you, because I'm older and know her better. She has no more heart than the stone you are leaning on; and it or you or I might fall into the water, and never come up again, and she wouldn't care. Yes—she would care for me, because she wants me to teach her: and she won't be able to get on without me, and will be forced to send for me from London. But she wouldn't if she didn't want me. She has no heart and no head, and no sense, and no feelings, and no griefs or cares, whatever. I was going to say no pleasures—but the fact is, she does like her dinner, and she is pleased when people admire her."

"And you do?" said Pen, interested out of himself, and wondering at the crabbed homely little old man.

"It's a habit, like taking snuff, or drinking drams," said the other.

"I've been taking her these five years, and can't do without her. It was I made her. If she doesn't send for me, I shall follow her: but I know she'll send for me. She wants me. Some day she'll marry, and fling me over, as I do the end of this cigar."

The little flaming spark dropped into the water below, and disappeared; and Pen, as he rode home that night, actually thought about somebody but himself.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HAPPY VILLAGE.

NTIL the enemy had retired altogether from before the place, Major Pendennis was resolved to keep his garrison in Fairoaks. He did not appear to watch Pen's behaviour, or to put any restraint on his nephew's actions, but he managed, nevertheless, to keep the lad constantly under his eye or those of his agents, and young Arthur's comings and goings were quite well known to his vigilant guardian.

I suppose there is scarcely any man who reads this or any other novel but has been balked in love some time or the other, by fate, and circumstance, by falsehood of women, or his own fault. Let that worthy friend recall his own sensations under the circumstances, and apply them as illustrative of Mr. Pen's anguish. Ah! what weary nights and sickening fevers! Ah! what mad desires dashing up against some rock of obstruction or indifference, and flung back again from the unimpressionable granite! If a list could be made this very night in London of the groans, thoughts, imprecations of tossing lovers, what a catalogue it would be! I wonder what a percentage of the male population of the metropolis will be lying awake at two or three o'clock to-morrow morning, counting the hours as they go by, knelling drearily, and rolling from left to right, restless, yearning, and heart-sick? What a pang it is! I never knew a man die of love, certainly, but I have known a twelve-stone man go down to nine stone five under a disappointed passion, so that pretty nearly a quarter of him may be said to have perished: and that

is no small portion. He has come back to his old size subsequently —perhaps is bigger than ever: very likely some new affection has closed round his heart and ribs and made them comfortable, and young Pen is a man who will console himself like the rest of us. We say this lest the ladies should be disposed to deplore him prematurely, or be seriously uneasy with regard to his complaint. His mother was; but what will not a maternal fondness fear or invent? "Depend on it, my dear creature," Major Pendennis would say gallantly to her, "the boy will recover. As soon as we get her out of the country, we will take him somewhere, and show him a little life. Meantime make yourself easy about him. Half a fellow's pangs at losing a woman result from vanity more than affection. To be left by a woman is the deuce and all, to be sure; but look how easily we leave 'em."

Mrs. Pendennis did not know. This sort of knowledge had by no means come within the simple lady's scope. Indeed, she did not like the subject or to talk of it: her heart had had its own little private misadventure, and she had borne up against it, and cured it: and perhaps she had not much patience with other folks' passions, except, of course, Arthur's, whose sufferings she made her own, feeling indeed very likely, in many of the boy's illnesses and pains, a great deal more than Pen himself endured. And she watched him through this present grief with a jealous silent sympathy; although, as we have said, he did not talk to her of his unfortunate condition.

The Major must be allowed to have had not a little merit and forbearance, and to have exhibited a highly creditable degree of family affection. The life at Fairoaks was uncommonly dull to a man who had the *entrée* of half the houses in London, and was in the habit of making his bow in three or four drawing-rooms of a night. A dinner with Doctor Portman or a neighbouring Squire now and then; a dreary rubber at backgammon with the widow, who did her utmost to amuse him; these were the chief of his pleasures. He used to long for the arrival of the bag with the letters, and he read every word of the evening paper. He doctored himself too, assiduously,—a course of quiet living would suit him well, he thought, after the London banquets. He dressed himself laboriously every morning and afternoon: he took regular exercise up and down the terrace walk. Thus, with his cane, his toilet, his medicine-chest, his backgammon-box, and his newspaper, this worthy and worldly philosopher fenced himself against ennui; and if he did not improve each shining hour, like the bees by the widow's garden wall, Major Pendennis made one hour after another pass as he could; and rendered his captivity just tolerable.

Pen sometimes took the box at backgammon of a night, or would listen to his mother's simple music of summer evenings—but he was very restless and wretched in spite of all: and has been known to be up before the early daylight even: and down at a carp-pond in Clavering Park, a dreary pool with innumerable whispering rushes and green alders, where a milkmaid drowned herself in the Baronet's grandfather's time, and her ghost was said to walk still. But Pen did not drown himself, as perhaps his mother fancied might be his intention. He liked to go and fish there, and think and think at leisure, as the float quivered in the little eddies of the pond, and the fish flapped about him. If he got a bite he was excited enough: and in this way occasionally brought home carps, tenches, and eels, which the Major cooked in the Continental fashion.

By this pond, and under a tree, which was his favourite resort, Pen composed a number of poems suitable to his circumstances—over which verses he blushed in after days, wondering how he could ever have invented such rubbish. And as for the tree, why it is in a hollow of this very tree, where he used to put his tin-box of ground-bait, and other fishing commodities, that he afterwards—but we are advancing matters. Suffice it to say, he wrote poems and relieved himself very much. When a man's grief or passion is at this point, it may be loud, but it is not very severe. When a gentleman is cudgelling his brain to find any rhyme for sorrow, besides borrow and to-morrow, his woes are nearer at an end than he thinks for. So were Pen's. He had his hot and cold fits, his days of sullenness and peevishness, and of blank resignation and despondency, and occasional mad paroxysms of rage and longing, in which fits Rebecca would be saddled and galloped fiercely about the country, or into Chatteris, her rider gesticulating wildly on her back, and astonishing carters and turnpikemen as he passed, crying out the name of the false one.

Mr. Foker became a very frequent and welcome visitor at Fairoaks during this period, where his good spirits and oddities always amused the Major and Pendennis, while they astonished the widow and little Laura not a little. His tandem made a great sensation in Clavering market-place; where he upset a market-stall, and cut Mrs. Pybus's poodle over the shaven quarters, and drank a glass of raspberry bitters at the Clavering Arms. All the society in the little place heard who he was, and looked out his name in their Peerages. He was so young, and their books so old, that his name did not appear in many of their volumes; and his mamma, now quite an antiquated lady,

figured amongst the progeny of the Earl of Rosherville, as Lady Agnes Milton still. But his name, wealth, and honourable lineage were speedily known about Clavering, where you may be sure that poor Pen's little transaction with the Chatteris actress was also pretty freely discussed.

Looking at the little old town of Clavering St. Mary from the London road as it runs by the lodge at Fairoaks, and seeing the rapid and shining Brawl winding down from the town and skirting the woods of Clavering Park, and the ancient church tower and peaked roofs of the houses rising up amongst trees and old walls, behind which swells a fair background of sunshiny hills that stretch from Clavering westwards towards the sea—the place appears to be so cheery and comfortable that many a traveller's heart must have yearned towards it from the coach-top, and he must have thought that it was in such a calm friendly nook he would like to shelter at the end of life's struggle. Tom Smith, who used to drive the Alacrity coach, would often point to a tree near the river, from which a fine view of the church and town was commanded, and inform his companion on the box that "Artises come and take hoff the Church from that there tree.—It was a Habby once sir:"—and indeed a pretty view it is, which I recommend to Mr. Stanfield or Mr. Roberts, for their next tour.

Like Constantinople seen from the Bosphorus; like Mrs. Rougemont viewed in her box from the opposite side of the house; like many an object which we pursue in life, and admire before we have attained it; Clavering is rather prettier at a distance than it is on a closer acquaintance. The town so cheerful of aspect a few furlongs off, looks very blank and dreary. Except on market days there is nobody in the streets. The clack of a pair of pattens echoes through half the place, and you may hear the creaking of the rusty old ensign at the Clavering Arms, without being disturbed by any other noise. There has not been a ball in the Assembly Rooms since the Clavering volunteers gave one to their Colonel, the old Sir Francis Clavering; and the stables which once held a great part of that brilliant, but defunct regiment, are now cheerless and empty, except on Thursdays, when the farmers put up there, and their tilted carts and gigs make a feeble show of liveliness in the place, or on Petty Sessions, when the magistrates attend in what used to be the old card-room.

On the south side of the market rises up the church, with its great grey towers. of which the sun illuminates the delicate carving;

deepening the shadows of the huge buttresses, and gilding the glittering windows, and flaming vanes. The image of the Patroness of the Church was wrenched out of the porch centuries ago : such of the statues of saints as were within reach of stones and hammer at that period of pious demolition, are maimed and headless, and of those who were out of fire, only Doctor Portman knows the names and history, for his curate, Smirke, is not much of an antiquarian, and Mr. Simcoe (husband of the Honourable Mrs. Simcoe), incumbent and architect of the Chapel of Ease in the lower town, thinks them the abomination of desolation.

The Rectory is a stout, broad-shouldered brick house, of the reign of Anne. It communicates with the church and market by different gates, and stands at the opening of Yew-tree Lane, where the Grammar School (Rev. —— Wapshot) is ; Yew-tree Cottage (Miss Flather) ; the butcher's slaughtering-house, an old barn or brew-house of the Abbey times, and the Misses Finucane's establishment for young ladies. The two schools had their pews in the loft on each side of the organ, until the Abbey Church getting rather empty, through the falling off of the congregation, who were inveigled to the Heresy-shop in the lower town, the Doctor induced the Misses Finucane to bring their pretty little flock downstairs ; and the young ladies' bonnets make a tolerable show in the rather vacant aisles. Nobody is in the great pew of the Clavering family, except the statues of defunct baronets and their ladies : there is Sir Poyntz Clavering, Knight and Baronet, kneeling in a square beard opposite his wife in a ruff : a very fat lady, the Dame Rebecca Clavering, in alto-relievo, is borne up to Heaven by two little blue-veined angels, who seem to have a severe task—and so forth. How well in after life Pen remembered those effigies, and how often in youth he scanned them as the Doctor was grumbling the sermon from the pulpit, and Smirke's mild head and forehead curl peered over the great prayer-book in the desk !

The Fairoaks folks were constant at the old church ; their servants had a pew, so had the Doctor's, so had Wapshot's, and those of the Misses Finucane's establishment, three maids and a very nice-looking young man in a livery. The Wapshot family were numerous and faithful. Glanders and his children regularly came to church : so did one of the apothecaries. Mrs. Pybus went, turn and turn about, to the Low Town church, and to the Abbey : the Charity School and their families of course came ; Wapshot's boys made a good cheerful noise, scuffling with their feet as they marched into church and up the organ-loft stair, and blowing their noses a good deal during the service.

To be brief, the congregation looked as decent as might be in these bad times. The Abbey Church was furnished with a magnificent screen, and many hatchments and heraldic tombstones. The Doctor spent a great part of his income in beautifying his darling place ; he had endowed it with a superb painted window, bought in the Netherlands, and an organ grand enough for a cathedral.

But in spite of organ and window, in consequence of the latter very likely, which had come out of a Papistical place of worship and was blazoned all over with idolatry, Clavering New Church prospered scandalously in the teeth of Orthodoxy ; and many of the Doctor's congregation deserted to Mr. Simcoe and the honourable woman his wife. Their efforts had thinned the very Ebenezer hard by them, which building before Simcoe's advent used to be so full, that you could see the backs of the congregation squeezing out of the arched windows thereof. Mr. Simcoe's tracts fluttered into the doors of all the Doctor's cottages, and were taken as greedily as honest Mrs. Portman's soup, with the quality of which the graceless people found fault. With the folks at the Ribbon Factory situated by the weir on the Brawl side, and round which the Low Town had grown, Orthodoxy could make no way at all. Quiet Miss Mira was put out of court by impetuous Mrs. Simcoe and her female aides-de-camp. Ah, it was a hard burthen for the Doctor's lady to bear, to behold her husband's congregation dwindling away ; to give the precedence on the few occasions when they met to a notorious low-churchman's wife who was the daughter of an Irish Peer ; to know that there was a party in Clavering, their own town of Clavering, on which her Doctor spent a great deal more than his professional income, who held him up to odium because he played a rubber at whist ; and pronounced him to be a Heathen because he went to the play. In her grief she besought him to give up the play and the rubber,—indeed they could scarcely get a table now, so dreadful was the outcry against the sport, —but the Doctor declared that he would do what he thought right, and what the great and good George the Third did (whose Chaplain he had been) : and as for giving up whist because those silly folks cried out against it, he would play dummy to the end of his days with his wife and Mira, rather than yield to their despicable persecutions.

Of the two families, owners of the Factory (which had spoiled the Brawl as a trout-stream and brought all the mischief into the town), the senior partner, Mr. Rolt, went to Ebenezer ; the junior, Mr. Barker, to the New Church. In a word, people quarrelled in this little place a great deal more than neighbours do in London ; and in the Book Club

which the prudent and conciliating Pendennis had set up, and which ought to have been a neutral territory, they bickered so much that nobody scarcely was ever seen in the reading-room, except Smirke, who, though he kept up a faint amity with the Simcoe faction, had still a taste for magazines and light worldly literature; and old Glanders, whose white head and grizzly moustache might be seen at the window; and of course, little Mrs. Pybus, who looked at everybody's letters as the Post brought them (for the Clavering Reading Room, as every one knows, used to be held at Baker's Library, London Street, formerly Hog Lane), and read every advertisement in the paper.

It may be imagined how great a sensation was created in this amiable little community when the news reached it of Mr. Pen's love-passages at Chatteris. It was carried from house to house, and formed the subject of talk at high-church, low-church, and no-church tables; it was canvassed by the Misses Finucane and their teachers, and very likely debated by the young ladies in the dormitories, for what we know; Wapshot's big boys had their version of the story and eyed Pen curiously as he sate in his pew at church, or raised the finger of scorn at him as he passed through Chatteris. They always hated him and called him Lord Pendennis, because he did not wear corduroys as they did, and rode a horse, and gave himself the airs of a buck.

And, if the truth must be told, it was Mrs. Portman herself who was the chief narrator of the story of Pen's loves. Whatever tales this candid woman heard, she was sure to impart them to her neighbours; and after she had been put into possession of Pen's secret by the little scandal at Chatteris, poor Doctor Portman knew that it would next day be about the parish of which he was the Rector. And so indeed it was; the whole society there had the legend—at the news-room, at the milliner's, at the shoe-shop, and the general warehouse at the corner of the market; at Mrs. Pybus's, at the Glanders's, at the Honourable Mrs. Simcoe's *soirée*, at the Factory; nay, through the mill itself the tale was current in a few hours, and young Arthur Pendennis's madness was in every mouth.

All Doctor Portman's acquaintances barked out upon him when he walked the street the next day. The poor divine knew that his Betsy was the author of the rumour, and groaned in spirit. Well, well,—it must have come in a day or two, and it was as well that the town should have the real story. What the Clavering folks thought of Mrs. Pendennis for spoiling her son, and of that precocious young

rascal of an Arthur, for daring to propose to a play-actress, need not be told here. If pride exists amongst any folks in our country, and assuredly we have enough of it, there is no pride more deep-seated than that of twopenny old gentlewomen in small towns. "Gracious goodness," the cry was, "how infatuated the mother is about that pert and headstrong boy who gives himself the airs of a *lord* on his *blood-horse*, and for whom *our* society is not good enough, and who would marry an odious painted actress off a booth, where very likely he wants to rant himself. If dear good Mr. Pendennis had been alive this scandal would never have happened."

No more it would, very likely, nor should we have been occupied in narrating Pen's history. It was true that he gave himself airs to the Clavering folks. Naturally haughty and frank, their cackle and small talk and small dignities bored him, and he showed a contempt which he could not conceal. The Doctor and the Curate were the only people Pen cared for in the place—even Mrs. Portman shared in the general distrust of him, and of his mother, the widow, who kept herself aloof from the village society, and was sneered at accordingly, because she tried, forsooth, to keep her head up with the great County families. She, indeed! Mrs. Barker at the Factory has four times the butcher's meat that goes up to Fairoaks, with all their fine airs.

&c. &c. &c.: let the reader fill up these details according to his liking and experience of village scandal. They will suffice to show how it was that a good woman, occupied solely in doing her duty to her neighbour and her children, and an honest, brave lad, impetuous, and full of good, and wishing well to every mortal alive, found enemies and detractors amongst people to whom they were superior, and to whom they had never done anything like harm. The Clavering curs were yelping all round the house of Fairoaks, and delighted to pull Pen down.

Doctor Portman and Smirke were both cautious of informing the widow of the constant outbreak of calumny which was pursuing poor Pen, though Glanders, who was a friend of the house, kept him *au courant*. It may be imagined what his indignation was: was there any man in the village whom he could call to account? Presently some wags began to chalk up "Fotheringay for ever!" and other sarcastic allusions to late transactions at Fairoaks' gate. Another brought a large play-bill from Chatteris, and wafered it there one night. On one occasion Pen, riding through the Low Town, fancied he heard the Factory boys jeer him; and finally, going through the Doctor's gate into the churchyard, where some of Wapshot's boys were

lounging, the biggest of them, a young gentleman about twenty years of age, son of a neighbouring small Squire, who lived in the doubtful capacity of parlour-boarder with Mr. Wapshot, flung himself into a theatrical attitude near a newly-made grave, and began repeating Hamlet's verses over Ophelia, with a hideous leer at Pen.

The young fellow was so enraged that he rushed at Hobnell Major with a shriek very much resembling an oath, cut him furiously across the face with the riding-whip which he carried, flung it away, calling upon the cowardly villain to defend himself, and in another minute knocked the bewildered young ruffian into the grave which was just waiting for a different lodger.

Then, with his fists clenched, and his face quivering with passion and indignation, he roared out to Mr. Hobnell's gaping companions, to know if any of the blackguards would come on? But they held back with a growl, and retreated, as Doctor Portman came up to his wicket, and Mr. Hobnell, with his nose and lip bleeding piteously, emerged from the grave.

Pen, looking death and defiance at the lads, who retreated towards their side of the churchyard, walked back again through the Doctor's wicket, and was interrogated by that gentleman. The young fellow was so agitated he could scarcely speak. His voice broke into a sob as he answered. "The — coward insulted me, sir," he said; and the Doctor passed over the oath, and respected the emotion of the honest suffering young heart.

Pendennis the elder, who, like a real man of the world, had a proper and constant dread of the opinion of his neighbour, was prodigiously annoyed by the absurd little tempest which was blowing in Chatteris, and tossing about Master Pen's reputation. Doctor Portman and Captain Glanders had to support the charges of the whole Chatteris society against the young reprobate, who was looked upon as a monster of crime. Pen did not say anything about the churchyard scuffle at home; but went over to Baymouth, and took counsel with his friend Harry Foker, Esq., who drove over his drag presently to the Clavering Arms, whence he sent Stoopid with a note to Thomas Hobnell, Esq., at the Rev. J. Wapshot's, and a civil message to ask when he should wait upon that gentleman.

Stoopid brought back word that the note had been opened by Mr. Hobnell, and read to half-a-dozen of the big boys, on whom it seemed to make a great impression; and that after consulting together and laughing, Mr. Hobnell said he would send an answer

"arter arternoon school, which the bell was a ringing: and Mr. Wapshot, he came out in his Master's gownd." Stoopid was learned in academical costume, having attended Mr. Foker at St. Boniface.

Mr. Foker went out to see the curiosities of Clavering meanwhile; but not having a taste for architecture, Doctor Portman's fine church

did not engage his attention much, and he pronounced the tower to be as mouldy as an old Stilton cheese. He walked down the street and looked at the few shops there; he saw Captain Glanders at the window of the Reading-room, and having taken a good stare at that gentleman, he wagged his head at him in token of satisfaction; he inquired the

price of meat at the butcher's with an air of the greatest interest, and asked "when was next killing day?" he flattened his little nose against Madam Fribsby's window to see if haply there was a pretty work-woman in her premises; but there was no face more comely than the doll's or dummy's wearing the French cap in the window, only that of Madame Fribsby herself, dimly visible in the parlour, reading a novel. That object was not of sufficient interest to keep Mr. Foker very long in contemplation, and so having exhausted the town and the inn stables, in which there were no cattle, save the single old pair of posters that earned a scanty livelihood by transporting the gentry round about to the county dinners, Mr. Foker was giving himself up to *ennui* entirely, when a messenger from Mr. Hobnell was at length announced.

It was no other than Mr. Wapshot himself, who came with an air of great indignation, and holding Pen's missive in his hand, asked Mr. Foker "how dared he bring such an unchristian message as a challenge to a boy of his school?"

In fact Pen had written a note to his adversary of the day before, telling him that if after the chastisement which his insolence richly deserved, he felt inclined to ask the reparation which was usually given amongst gentlemen, Mr. Arthur Pendennis's friend, Mr. Henry Foker, was empowered to make any arrangements for the satisfaction of Mr. Hobnell.

"And so he sent *you* with the answer—did he, sir?" Mr. Foker said, surveying the Schoolmaster in his black coat and clerical costume.

"If he had accepted this wicked challenge, I should have flogged him," Mr. Wapshot said, and gave Mr. Foker a glance which seemed to say, "and I should like very much to flog you too."

"Uncommon kind of you, sir, I'm sure," said Pen's emissary. "I told my principal that I didn't think the other man would fight," he continued with a great air of dignity. "He prefers being flogged to fighting, sir, I dare say. May I offer you any refreshment, Mr. —? I haven't the advantage of your name."

"My name is Wapshot, sir, and I am Master of the Grammar School of this town, sir," cried the other: "and I want no refreshment, sir, I thank you, and have no desire to make your acquaintance, sir."

"I didn't seek yours, sir, I'm sure," replied Mr. Foker. "In affairs of this sort, you see, I think it is a pity that the clergy should be called in, but there's no accounting for tastes, sir."

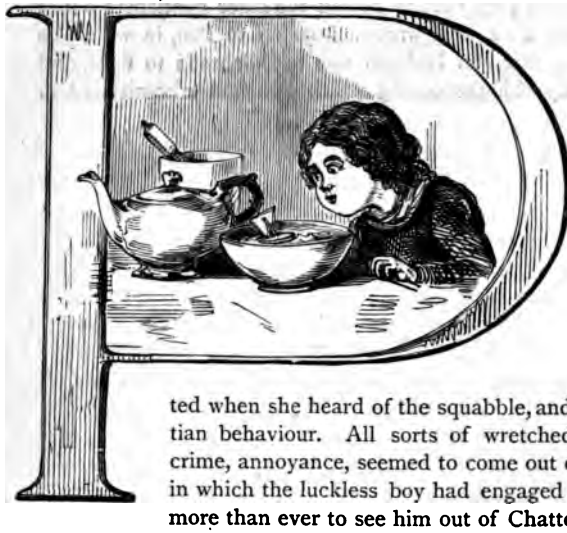
"I think it's a pity that boys should talk about committing murder, sir, as lightly as you do," roared the Schoolmaster: "and if I had you in my school—"

"I dare say you would teach me better, sir," Mr. Foker said, with a bow. "Thank you, sir. I've finished my education, sir, and ain't a-going back to school, sir—when I do, I'll remember your kind offer, sir. John, show this gentleman downstairs—and, of course, as Mr. Hobnell likes being thrashed, we can have no objection, sir, and we shall be very happy to accommodate him, whenever he comes our way."

And with this, the young fellow bowed the elder gentleman out of the room, and sate down and wrote a note off to Pen, in which he informed the latter, that Mr. Hobnell was not disposed to fight, and proposed to put up with the caning which Pen had administered to him.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHICH CONCLUDES THE FIRST PART OF THIS HISTORY.



PEN'S conduct in this business of course was soon made public, and angered his friend Doctor Portman not a little; while it only amused Major Pendennis. As for the good Mrs. Pendennis, she was almost distracted when she heard of the squabble, and of Pen's unchristian behaviour. All sorts of wretchedness, discomfort, crime, annoyance, seemed to come out of this transaction in which the luckless boy had engaged: and she longed more than ever to see him out of Chatteris for a while,—anywhere removed from the woman who had brought him into so much trouble.

Pen when remonstrated with by this fond parent, and angrily rebuked by the Doctor for his violence and ferocious intentions, took the matter *au grand sérieux*, with the happy conceit and gravity of youth: said that he would permit no man to insult him upon this head without vindicating his own honour, and appealing, asked whether he could have acted otherwise as a gentleman, than as he did in resenting the outrage offered to him, and in offering satisfaction to the person chastised?

"*Vous allez trop vite*, my good sir," said the uncle, rather puzzled, for he had been indoctrinating his nephew with some of his own notions

upon the point of honour—old-world notions savouring of the camp and pistol a great deal more than our soberer opinions of the present day—"between men of the world I don't say; but between two schoolboys, this sort of thing is ridiculous, my dear boy—perfectly ridiculous."

"It is extremely wicked, and unlike my son," said Mrs. Pendennis, with tears in her eyes; and bewildered with the obstinacy of the boy.

Pen kissed her, and said with great pomposity, "Women, dear mother, don't understand these matters—I put myself into Foker's hands—I had no other course to pursue."

Major Pendennis grinned and shrugged his shoulders. The young ones were certainly making great progress, he thought. Mrs. Pendennis declared that that Foker was a wicked horrid little wretch, and was sure that he would lead her dear boy into mischief, if Pen went to the same college with him. "I have a great mind not to let him go at all," she said: and only that she remembered that the lad's father had always destined him for the College in which he had had his own brief education, very likely the fond mother would have put a veto upon his going to the University.

That he was to go, and at the next October term, had been arranged between all the authorities who presided over the lad's welfare. Foker had promised to introduce him to the right set; and Major Pendennis laid great store upon Pen's introduction into College life and society by this admirable young gentleman. "Mr. Foker knows the very best young men now at the University," the Major said, "and Pen will form acquaintances there who will be of the greatest advantage through life to him. The young Marquis of Plinlimmon is there, eldest son of the Duke of St. David's—Lord Magnus Charters is there, Lord Runnymede's son; and a first cousin of Mr. Foker, (Lady Runnymede, my dear, was Lady Agatha Milton, you of course remember,) Lady Agnes will certainly invite him to Logwood; and far from being alarmed at his intimacy with her son, who is a singular and humorous, but most prudent and amiable young man, to whom, I am sure, we are under every obligation for his admirable conduct in the affair of the Fotheringay marriage, I look upon it as one of the very luckiest things which could have happened to Pen, that he should have formed an intimacy with this most amusing young gentleman."

Helen sighed, she supposed the Major knew best. Mr. Foker had been very kind in the wretched business with Miss Costigan, certainly,

and she was grateful to him. But she could not feel otherwise than a dim presentiment of evil; and all these quarrels, and riots, and worldliness, scared her about the fate of her boy.

Doctor Portman was decidedly of opinion that Pen should go to College. He hoped the lad would read, and have a moderate indulgence of the best society too. He was of opinion that Pen would distinguish himself: Smirke spoke very highly of his proficiency: the Doctor himself had heard him construe, and thought he acquitted himself remarkably well. That he should go out of Chatteris was a great point at any rate; and Pen, who was distracted from his private grief by the various rows and troubles which had risen round about him, gloomily said he would obey.

There were assizes, races, and the entertainments and the flux of company consequent upon them, at Chatteris, during a part of the months of August and September, and Miss Fotheringay still continued to act, and take farewell of the audiences at the Chatteris Theatre during that time. Nobody seemed to be particularly affected by her presence, or her announced departure, except those persons whom we have named; nor could the polite county folks, who had houses in London, and very likely admired the Fotheringay prodigiously in the capital, when they had been taught to do so by the Fashion which set in in her favour, find anything remarkable in the actress performing on the little Chatteris boards. Many a genius and many a quack, for that matter, has met with a similar fate before and since Miss Costigan's time. This honest woman meanwhile bore up against the public neglect, and any other crosses or vexations which she might have in life, with her usual equanimity; and ate, drank, acted, slept, with that regularity and comfort which belongs to people of her temperament. What a deal of grief, care, and other harmful excitement, does a healthy dulness and cheerful insensibility avoid! Nor do I mean to say that Virtue is not Virtue because it is never tempted to go astray; only that dulness is a much finer gift than we give it credit for being, and that some people are very lucky whom Nature has endowed with a good store of that great anodyne.

Pen used to go drearily in and out from the play at Chatteris during this season, and pretty much according to his fancy. His proceedings tortured his mother not a little, and her anxiety would have led her often to interfere, had not the Major constantly checked, and at the same time encouraged her; for the wily man of the world fancied he saw that a favourable turn had occurred in Pen's malady. It was the violent efflux of versification, among other symptoms, which gave Pen's

guardian and physician satisfaction. He might be heard spouting verses in the shrubbery walks, or muttering them between his teeth as he sat with the home party of evenings. One day prowling about the house in Pen's absence, the Major found a great book full of verses in the lad's study. They were in English, and in Latin; quotations from the classic authors were given in the scholastic manner in the foot-notes. He can't be very bad, wisely thought the Pall-Mall Philosopher: and he made Pen's mother remark (not, perhaps, without a secret feeling of disappointment, for she loved romance like other soft women), that the young gentleman during the last fortnight came home quite hungry to dinner at night, and also showed a very decent appetite at the breakfast table in the morning. "Gad, I wish I could," said the Major, thinking ruefully of his dinner pills. "The boy begins to sleep well, depend upon that." It was cruel, but it was true.

Having no other soul to confide in, the lad's friendship for the Curate redoubled, or rather, he was never tired of having Smirke for a listener on that one subject. What is a lover without a confidant? Pen employed Mr. Smirke, as Corydon does the elm-tree, to cut out his mistress's name upon. He made him echo with the name of the beautiful Amaryllis. When men have left off playing the tune, they do not care much for the pipe: but Pen thought he had a great friendship for Smirke, because he could sigh out his loves and griefs into his tutor's ears; and Smirke had his own reasons for always being ready at the lad's call.

The poor Curate was naturally very much dismayed at the contemplated departure of his pupil. When Arthur should go, Smirke's occupation and delight would go too. What pretext could he find for a daily visit to Fairoaks, and that kind word or glance from the lady there, which was as necessary to the Curate as the frugal dinner which Madame Fribsby served him? Arthur gone, he would only be allowed to make visits like any other acquaintance: little Laura could not accommodate him by learning the Catechism more than once a week: he had curled himself like ivy round Fairoaks: he pined at the thought that he must lose his hold of the place. Should he speak his mind and go down on his knees to the widow? He thought over any indications in her behaviour which flattered his hopes. She had praised his sermon three weeks before: she had thanked him exceedingly for his present of a melon, for a small dinner party which Mrs. Pendennis gave: she said she should always be grateful to him for his kindness to Arthur: and when he declared that there were no bounds to his love and affection for that dear boy, she had certainly replied in a

romantic manner, indicating her own strong gratitude and regard to all her son's friends. Should he speak out?—or should he delay? If he spoke and she refused him, it was awful to think that the gate of Fairoaks might be shut upon him for ever—and within that door lay all the world for Mr. Smirke.

Thus, oh friendly readers,we see how every man in the world has his own private griefs and business, by which he is more cast down or occupied than by the affairs or sorrows of any other person. While Mrs. Pendennis is disquieting herself about losing her son, and that anxious hold she has had of him, as long as he has remained in the mother's nest, whence he is about to take flight into the great world beyond—while the Major's great soul chafes and frets, inwardly vexed as he thinks what great parties are going on in London, and that he might be sunning himself in the glances of Dukes and Duchesses, but for those cursed affairs which keep him in a wretched little country hole—while Pen is tossing between his passion and a more agreeable sensation, unacknowledged yet, but swaying him considerably, namely, his longing to see the world—Mr. Smirke has a private care watching at his bed-side, and sitting behind him on his pony; and is no more satisfied than the rest of us. How lonely we are in the world! how selfish and secret, everybody! You and your wife have pressed the same pillow for forty years and fancy yourselves united.—Psha, does she cry out when you have the gout, or do you lie awake when she has the tooth-ache? Your artless daughter seemingly all innocence and devoted to her mamma and her piano-lesson, is thinking of neither, but of the young Lieutenant with whom she danced at the last ball—the honest frank boy just returned from school is secretly speculating upon the money you will give him, and the debts he owes the tart-man. The old grandmother crooning in the corner and bound to another world within a few months, has some business or cares which are quite private and her own—very likely she is thinking of fifty years back, and that night when she made such an impression, and danced a cotillon with the Captain before your father proposed for her; or, what a silly little over-rated creature your wife is, and how absurdly you are infatuated about her—and, as for your wife—O philosophic reader, answer and say,—Do you tell *her* all? Ah, sir—a distinct universe walks about under your hat and under mine—all things in nature are different to each—the woman we look at has not the same features, the dish we eat from has not the same taste to the one and the other—you and I are but a pair of infinite isolations, with some

fellow-islands a little more or less near to us. Let us return, however, to the solitary Smirke.

Smirke had one confidant for his passion—that most injudicious woman, Madame Fribsby. How she became Madame Fribsby, nobody knows: she had left Clavering to go to a milliner's in London as Miss Fribsby—she pretended that she had got the rank in Paris during her residence in that city. But how could the French king, were he ever so much disposed, give her any such title? We shall not inquire into this mystery, however. Suffice to say, she went away from home a bouncing young lass; she returned a rather elderly character, with a Madonna front and a melancholy countenance—bought the late Mrs. Harbottle's business for a song—took her elderly mother to live with her; was very good to the poor, was constant at church, and had the best of characters. But there was no one in all Clavering, not Mrs. Portman herself, who read so many novels as Madame Fribsby. She had plenty of time for this amusement, for, in truth, very few people besides the folks at the Rectory and Fairoaks employed her; and by a perpetual perusal of such works (which were by no means so moral or edifying in the days of which we write, as they are at present), she had got to be so absurdly sentimental, that in her eyes life was nothing but an immense love-match; and she never could see two people together, but she fancied they were dying for one another.

On the day after Mrs. Pendennis's visit to the Curate, which we have recorded many pages back, Madame Fribsby settled in her mind that Mr. Smirke must be in love with the widow, and did everything in her power to encourage this passion on both sides. Mrs. Pendennis she very seldom saw, indeed, except in public, and in her pew at church. That lady had very little need of millinery, or made most of her own dresses and caps; but on the rare occasions when Madame Fribsby received visits from Mrs. Pendennis, or paid her respects at Fairoaks, she never failed to entertain the widow with praises of the Curate, pointing out what an angelical man he was, how gentle, how studious, how lonely; and she would wonder that no lady would take pity upon him.

Helen laughed at these sentimental remarks, and wondered that Madame herself did not compassionate her lodger, and console him. Madame Fribsby shook her Madonna front. "*Mong cure a boco souffare*," she said, laying her hand on the part she designated as her cure. "*Il est more en Espang, Madame*," she said with a sigh. She was proud of her intimacy with the French language, and spoke it with more volubility than correctness. Mrs. Pendennis did not care

to penetrate the secrets of this wounded heart: except to her few intimates she was a reserved, and it may be a very proud woman; she looked upon her son's tutor merely as an attendant on that young Prince, to be treated with respect as a clergyman certainly,-but with proper dignity as a dependant on the house of Pendennis. Nor were Madame's constant allusions to the Curate particularly agreeable to her. It required a very ingenious sentimental turn indeed to find out that the widow had a secret regard for Mr. Smirke, to which pernicious error however Madame Fribsby persisted in holding.

Her lodger was very much more willing to talk on this subject with his soft-hearted landlady. Every time after that she praised the Curate to Mrs. Pendennis, she came away from the latter with the notion that the widow herself had been praising him. "*Etre soul au monde est bien ouneeyong*," she would say, glancing up at a print of a French carbineer in a green coat and brass cuirass which decorated her apartment—"Depend upon it when Master Pendennis goes to college, his Ma will find herself very lonely. She is quite young yet.—You wouldn't suppose her to be five-and-twenty. *Monsieur le Cury, song cure est touchy—j'ong suis sure—Je conny cela biang—Ally Monsieur Smirke.*"

He softly blushed; he sighed; he hoped; he feared; he doubted; he sometimes yielded to the delightful idea—his pleasure was to sit in Madame Fribsby's apartment, and talk upon the subject, where, as the greater part of the conversation was carried on in French by the Milliner, and her old mother was deaf, that retired old individual (who had once been a housekeeper, wife and widow of a butler in the Clavering family), could understand scarce one syllable of their talk.

When Major Pendennis announced to his nephew's tutor that the young fellow would go to College in October, and that Mr. Smirke's valuable services would no longer be needful to his pupil, for which services the Major, who spoke as grandly as a lord, professed himself exceedingly grateful, and besought Mr. Smirke to command his interest in any way—the Curate felt that the critical moment was come for him, and was racked and tortured by those severe pangs which the occasion warranted.

And now that Arthur was going away, Helen's heart was rather softened towards the Curate, from whom, perhaps divining his intentions, she had shrunk hitherto: she bethought her how very polite Mr. Smirke had been; how he had gone on messages for her; how he had brought books and copied music; how he had taught Laura so many things, and given her so many kind presents. Her

heart smote her on account of her ingratitude towards the Curate :—so much so, that one afternoon when he came down from study with Pen, and was hankering about the hall previous to his departure, she went out and shook hands with him with rather a blushing face, and begged him to come into her drawing-room, where she said they now never saw him. And as there was to be rather a good dinner that day, she invited Mr. Smirke to partake of it ; and we may be sure that he was too happy to accept such a delightful summons.

Helen was exceedingly kind and gracious to Mr. Smirke during dinner, redoubling her attentions, perhaps because Major Pendennis was very high and reserved with his nephew's tutor. When Pendennis asked Smirke to drink wine, he addressed him as if he was a Sovereign speaking to a petty retainer, in a manner so condescending, that even Pen laughed at it, although quite ready, for his part, to be as conceited as most young men are.

But Smirke did not care for the impertinences of the Major so long as he had his hostess's kind behaviour ; and he passed a delightful time by her side at table, exerting all his powers of conversation to please her, talking in a manner both clerical and worldly, about the fancy Bazaar, and the Great Missionary Meeting, about the last new novel, and the Bishop's excellent sermon—about the fashionable parties in London, an account of which he read in the newspapers—in fine, he neglected no art, by which a College divine who has both sprightly and serious talents, a taste for the genteel, an irreproachable conduct, and a susceptible heart, will try and make himself agreeable to the person on whom he has fixed his affections.

Major Pendennis came yawning out of the dining-room very soon after his sister and little Laura had left the apartment.

Now Arthur, flushed with a good deal of pride at the privilege of having the keys of the cellar, and remembering that a very few more dinners would probably take place which he and his dear friend Smirke could share, had brought up a liberal supply of claret for the company's drinking, and when the elders with little Laura left him, he and the Curate began to pass the wine very freely.

One bottle speedily yielded up the ghost, another shed more than half its blood, before the two topers had been much more than half an hour together—Pen, with a hollow laugh and voice, had drunk off one bumper to the falsehood of women, and had said sardonically, that wine at any rate was a mistress who never deceived, and was sure to give a man a welcome.

Smirke gently said that he knew for his part some women who

were all truth and tenderness; and casting up his eyes towards the ceiling, and heaving a sigh as if evoking some being dear and unmentionable, he took up his glass and drained it, and the rosy liquor began to suffuse his face.

Pen trolled over some verses he had been making that morning, in which he informed himself that the woman who had slighted his passion could not be worthy to win it: that he was awaking from love's mad fever, and, of course, under these circumstances, proceeded to leave her, and to quit a heartless deceiver: that a name which had one day been famous in the land, might again be heard in it: and, that though he never should be the happy and careless boy he was but a few months since, or his heart be what it had been ere passion had filled it and grief had well-nigh killed it; that though to him personally death was as welcome as life, and that he would not hesitate to part with the latter, but for the love of one kind being whose happiness depended on his own,—yet he hoped to show he was a man worthy of his race, and that one day the false one should be brought to know how great was the treasure and noble the heart which she had flung away.

Pen, we say, who was a very excitable person, rolled out these verses in his rich sweet voice, which trembled with emotion whilst our young poet spoke. He had a trick of blushing when in this excited state, and his large and honest grey eyes also exhibited proofs of a sensibility so genuine, hearty, and manly, that Miss Costigan, if she had a heart, must needs have softened toward him; and very likely she was, as he said, altogether unworthy of the affection which he lavished upon her.

The sentimental Smirke was caught by the emotion which agitated his young friend. He grasped Pen's hand over the dessert dishes and wine glasses. He said the verses were beautiful: that Pen was a poet, a great poet, and likely by Heaven's permission to run a great career in the world. "Go on and prosper, dear Arthur," he cried: "the wounds under which at present you suffer are only temporary, and the very grief you endure will cleanse and strengthen your heart. I have always prophesied the greatest and brightest things of you, as soon as you have corrected some failings and weaknesses of character, which at present belong to you. But you will get over these, my boy, you will get over these; and when you are famous and celebrated, as I know you will be, will you remember your old tutor and the happy early days of your youth?"

Pen swore he would: with another shake of the hand across the

glasses and apricots. "I shall never forget how kind you have been to me, Smirke," he said. "I don't know what I should have done without you. You are my best friend."

"Am I *really*, Arthur?" said Smirke, looking through his spectacles; and his heart began to beat so that he thought Pen must almost hear it throbbing.

"My best friend, my friend *for ever*," Pen said. "God bless you, old boy," and he drank up the last glass of the second bottle of the famous wine which his father had laid in, which his uncle had bought, which Lord Levant had imported, and which now, like a slave indifferent, was ministering pleasure to its present owner, and giving its young master delectation.

"We'll have another bottle, old boy," Pen said, "by Jove we will. Hurray!—claret goes for nothing. My uncle was telling me that he saw Sheridan drink five bottles at Brookes's, besides a bottle of Maraschino. This is some of the finest wine in England, he says. So it is by Jove. There's nothing like it. *Nunc vino pellite curas—cras ingens iterabimus æq*—fill your glass, Old Smirke, a hogshead of it won't do you any harm." And Mr. Pen began to sing the drinking song out of "Der Freischütz." The dining-room windows were open, and his mother was softly pacing on the lawn outside, while little Laura was looking at the sunset. The sweet fresh notes of the boy's voice came to the widow. It cheered her kind heart to hear him sing.

"You—you are taking too much wine, Arthur," Mr. Smirke said softly—"you are exciting yourself."

"No," said Pen, "women give headaches, but this don't. Fill your glass, old fellow, and let's drink—I say, Smirke, my boy—let's drink to her—*your* her, I mean, not mine, for whom I swear I'll care no more—no, not a penny—no, not a fig—no, not a glass of wine. Tell us about the lady, Smirke; I've often seen you sighing about her."

"Oh!" said Smirke—and his beautiful cambric shirt front and glistening studs heaved with the emotion which agitated his gentle and suffering bosom.

"Oh—what a sigh!" Pen cried, growing very hilarious; "fill, my boy, and drink the toast; you can't refuse a toast. no gentleman refuses a toast. Here's her health, and good luck to you, and may she soon be Mrs. Smirke."

"*Do* you say so?" Smirke said, all of a tremble. "Do you really say so, Arthur?"

"Say so; of course I say so. Down with it. Here's Mrs. Smirke's good health: Hip, hip, hurray!"

Smirke convulsively gulped down his glass of wine, and Pen waved his over his head, cheering so as to make his mother and Laura wonder on the lawn, and his uncle, who was dozing over the paper in the drawing-room, start, and say to himself, "that boy's drinking too much." Smirke put down the glass.

"I accept the omen," gasped out the blushing Curate. "Oh, my dear Arthur, you—you know her—"

"What—Mira Portman? I wish you joy: she's got a dev'lish large waist; but I wish you joy, old fellow."

"Oh, Arthur!" groaned the Curate again, and nodded his head, speechless.

"Beg your pardon—sorry I offended you—but she *has* got a large waist, you know—devilish large waist," Pen continued—the third bottle evidently beginning to act upon the young gentleman.

"It's not Miss Portman," the other said, in a voice of agony.

"Is it anybody at Chatteris or at Clapham? Somebody here? No—it ain't old Pybus? it can't be Miss Rolt at the Factory—she's only fourteen."

"It's somebody rather older than I am, Pen," the Curate cried, looking up at his friend, and then guiltily casting his eyes down into his plate.

Pen burst out laughing. "It's Madame Fribsby, by Jove, it's Madame Fribsby. Madame Frib. by the immortal Gods!"

The Curate could contain no more. "O Pen," he cried, "how can you suppose that any of those—of those more than ordinary beings you have named—could have an influence upon this heart, when I have been daily in the habit of contemplating perfection! I may be insane, I may be madly ambitious, I may be presumptuous—but for two years my heart has been filled by one image, and has known no other idol. Haven't I loved you as a son, Arthur?—say, hasn't Charles Smirke loved you as a son?"

"Yes, old boy, you've been very good to me," Pen said, whose liking, however, for his tutor was not by any means of the filial kind.

"My means," rushed on Smirke, "are at present limited, I own, and my mother is not so liberal as might be desired; but what she has will be mine at her death. Were she to hear of my marrying a lady of rank and good fortune, my mother would be liberal, I am sure she would be liberal. Whatever I have or subsequently inherit—and it's five hundred a year at the very least—would be settled upon her, and —and—and you at my death—that is—"

"What the deuce do you mean?—and what have I to do with your money?" cried out Pen, in a puzzle.

"Arthur, Arthur!" exclaimed the other wildly; "You say I am your dearest friend—Let me be more. Oh, can't you see that the angelic being I love—the purest, the best of women—is no other than your dear, dear angel of a—mother."

"My mother!" cried out Arthur, jumping up and sober in a minute. "Pooh! damn it, Smirke, you must be mad—she's seven or eight years older than you are."

"Did *you* find that any objection?" cried Smirke piteously, and alluding, of course, to the elderly subject of Pen's own passion.

The lad felt the hint, and blushed quite red. "The cases are not similar, Smirke," he said, "and the allusion might have been spared. A man may forget his own rank and elevate any woman to it; but allow me to say our positions are very different."

"How do you mean, dear Arthur?" the Curate interposed sadly, cowering as he felt that his sentence was about to be read.

"Mean?" said Arthur. "I mean what I say. My tutor, I say *my tutor*, has no right to ask a lady of my mother's rank of life to marry him. It's a breach of confidence. I say it's a liberty you take, Smirke—it's a liberty. Mean, indeed!"

"O Arthur!" the Curate began to cry with clasped hands, and a scared face, but Arthur gave another stamp with his foot, and began to pull at the bell. "Don't let's have any more of this. We'll have some coffee, if you please," he said with a majestic air: and the old butler entering at the summons, Arthur bade him to serve that refreshment.

John said he had just carried coffee into the drawing-room, where his uncle was asking for Master Arthur, and the old man gave a glance of wonder at the three empty claret-bottles. Smirke said he thought he'd—he'd rather not go into the drawing-room, on which Arthur haughtily said "As you please," and called for Mr. Smirke's horse to be brought round. The poor fellow said he knew the way to the stable and would get his pony himself, and he went into the hall and sadly put on his coat and hat.

Pen followed him out uncovered. Helen was still walking up and down the soft lawn as the sun was setting, and the Curate took off his hat and bowed by way of farewell, and passed on to the door leading to the stable court by which the pair disappeared. Smirke knew the way to the stable as he said, well enough. He fumbled at the girths of the saddle, which Pen fastened for him, and put on the bridle and

led the pony into the yard. The boy was touched by the grief which appeared in the other's face as he mounted. Pen held out his hand, and Smirke wrung it silently.

"I say, Smirke," he said in an agitated voice, "forgive me if I have said anything harsh—for you have always been very, very kind to me. But it can't be, old fellow, it can't be. Be a man. God bless you."

Smirke nodded his head silently, and rode out of the lodge gate: and Pen looked after him for a couple of minutes, until he disappeared down the road, and the clatter of the pony's hoofs died away. Helen was still lingering on the lawn waiting until the boy came back —she put his hair off his forehead and kissed it fondly. She was afraid he had been drinking too much wine. Why had Mr. Smirke gone away without any tea?

He looked at her with a kind humour beaming in his eyes; "Smirke is unwell," he said with a laugh. For a long while Helen had not seen the boy looking so cheerful. He put his arm round her waist, and walked her up and down the walk in front of the house. Laura began to drub on the drawing-room window and nod and laugh from it. "Come along you two people," cried out Major Pendennis, "your coffee is getting quite cold."

When Laura was gone to bed, Pen, who was big with his secret, burst out with it, and described the dismal but ludicrous scene which had occurred. Helen heard of it with many blushes, which became her pale face very well, and a perplexity which Arthur roguishly enjoyed.

"Confound the fellow's impudence," Major Pendennis said as he took his candle; "where will the assurance of these people stop?" Pen and his mother had a long talk that night, full of love, confidence, and laughter, and the boy somehow slept more soundly and woke up more easily than he had done for many months before.

Before the great Mr. Dolphin quitted Chatteris, he not only made an advantageous engagement with Miss Fotheringay, but he liberally left with her a sum of money to pay off any debts which the little family might have contracted during their stay in the place, and which, mainly through the lady's own economy and management, were not considerable. The small account with the spirit merchant, which Major Pendennis had settled, was the chief of Captain Costigan's debts, and though the Captain at one time talked about repaying every farthing of the money, it never appears that he executed his menace,

nor did the laws of honour in the least call upon him to accomplish that threat.

When Miss Costigan had seen all the outstanding bills paid to the uttermost shilling, she handed over the balance to her father, who broke out into hospitalities to all his friends, gave the little Creeds more apples and gingerbread than he had ever bestowed upon them, so that the widow Creed ever after held the memory of her lodger in veneration, and the young ones wept bitterly when he went away; and in a word managed the money so cleverly that it was entirely expended before many days, and he was compelled to draw upon Mr. Dolphin for a sum to pay for travelling expenses when the time of their departure arrived.

There was held at an inn in that county town a weekly meeting of a festive, almost a riotous character, of a society of gentlemen who called themselves the Buccaneers. Some of the choice spirits of Chatteris belonged to this cheerful Club. Graves, the apothecary (than whom a better fellow never put a pipe in his mouth and smoked it), Smart, the talented and humorous portrait-painter of High Street, Croker, an excellent auctioneer, and the uncompromising Hicks, the able Editor for twenty-three years of the County Chronicle and Chatteris Champion, were amongst the crew of the Buccaneers, whom also Bingley, the manager, liked to join of a Saturday evening, whenever he received permission from his lady.

Costigan had been also an occasional Buccaneer. But a want of punctuality of payments had of late somewhat excluded him from the Society, where he was subject to disagreeable remarks from the landlord, who said that a Buccaneer who didn't pay his shot was utterly unworthy to be a Marine Bandit. But when it became known to the 'Ears, as the Clubbists called themselves familiarly, that Miss Fotheringay had made a splendid engagement, a great revolution of feeling took place in the Club regarding Captain Costigan. Solly, mine host of the Grapes, told the gents in the Buccaneers' room one night how noble the Captain had beayved; having been round and paid off all his ticks in Chatteris, including his score of three pound fourteen here—and pronounced that Cos was a good fellar, a gentleman at bottom, and he, Solly, had alway's said so, and finally worked upon the feelings of the Buccaneers to give the Captain a dinner.

The banquet took place on the last night of Costigan's stay at Chatteris, and was served in Solly's accustomed manner. As good a plain dinner of old English fare as ever smoked on a table was

prepared by Mrs. Solly; and about eighteen gentlemen sat down to the festive board. Mr. Jubber (the eminent draper of High Street) was in the Chair, having the distinguished guest of the Club on his right. The able and consistent Hicks officiated as croupier on the occasion; most of the gentlemen of the Club were present, and H. Foker, Esq., and —— Spavin, Esq., friends of Captain Costigan, were also participators in the entertainment. The cloth having been drawn, the Chairman said, "Costigan, there is wine, if you like," but the Captain preferring punch, that liquor was voted by acclamation: and "Non Nobis" having been sung in admirable style by Messrs. Bingley, Hicks, and Bullby (of the Cathedral choir, than whom a more jovial spirit "ne'er tossed off a bumper or emptied a bowl"), the Chairman gave the health of the "King!" which was drunk with the loyalty of Chatteris men, and then, without further circumlocution, proposed their friend "Captain Costigan."

After the enthusiastic cheering, which rang through old Chatteris, had subsided, Captain Costigan rose in reply, and made a speech of twenty minutes, in which he was repeatedly overcome by his emotions.

The gallant Captain said he must be pardoned for incoherence, if his heart was too full to speak. He was quitting a city celebrated for its antiquitee, its hospitalitee, the beautee of its women, the manly fidelitee, generositee, and jovialitee of its men. (Cheers.) He was going from that ancient and venerable city, of which, while Mimoree held her sayt, he should never think without the fondest emotion, to a methrawpolis where the talents of his daughter were about to have full play, and where he would watch over her like a guardian angel. He should never forget that it was at Chatteris she had acquired the skill which she was about to exercise in another sphere, and in her name and his own, Jack Costigan thanked and blessed them. The gallant officer's speech was received with tremendous cheers.

Mr. Hicks, Croupier, in a brilliant and energetic manner, proposed Miss Fotheringay's health.

Captain Costigan returned thanks in a speech full of feeling and eloquence.

Mr. Jubber proposed the Drama and the Chatteris Theatre, and Mr. Bingley was about to rise, but was prevented by Captain Costigan, who, as long connected with the Chatteris Theatre, and on behalf of his daughter, thanked the company. He informed them that he had been in garrison, at Gibraltar, and at Malta, and had been at the taking of Flushing. The Duke of York was a patron of the Drama;

he had the honour of dining with His Royal Highness and the Duke of Kent many times; and the former had justly been named the friend of the soldier. (Cheers.)

The Army was then proposed, and Captain Costigan returned

thanks. In the course of the night, he sang his well-known songs, "The Deserter," "The Shan Van Voght," "The Little Pig under the Bed," and "The Vale of Avoca." The evening was a great triumph for him—it ended. All triumphs and all evenings end. And the

next day, Miss Costigan having taken leave of all her friends, having been reconciled to Miss Rouncy, to whom she left a necklace and a white satin gown—the next day, he and Miss Costigan had places in the Competitor coach rolling by the gates of Fairoaks Lodge—and Pendennis never saw them.

Tom Smith, the coachman, pointed out Fairoaks to Mr. Costigan, who sate on the box smelling of rum-and-water—and the Captain said it was a poor place—and added, "Ye should see Castle Costigan, County Mayo, me boy,"—which Tom said he should like very much to see.

They were gone, and Pen had never seen them! He only knew of their departure by its announcement in the county paper the next day: and straight galloped over to Chatteris to hear the truth of this news. They were gone indeed. A card of "Lodgings to let" was placed in the dear little familiar window. He rushed up into the room and viewed it over. He sate ever so long in the old window-seat looking into the Dean's Garden: whence he and Emily had so often looked out together. He walked, with a sort of terror, into her little empty bed-room. It was swept out and prepared for new comers. The glass which had reflected her fair face was shining ready for her successor. The curtains lay square folded on the little bed: he flung himself down and buried his head on the vacant pillow.

Laura had netted a purse into which his mother had put some sovereigns, and Pen had found it on his dressing-table that very morning. He gave one to the little servant who had been used to wait upon the Costigans, and another to the children, because they said they were very fond of *her*. It was but a few months back, yet what years ago it seemed since he had first entered that room! He felt that it was all done. The very missing her at the coach had something fatal in it. Blank, weary, utterly wretched and lonely the poor lad felt.

His mother saw She was gone by his look when he came home. He was eager to fly too now, as were other folks round about Chatteris. Poor Smirke wanted to go away from the sight of the siren widow, Foker began to think he had had enough of Baymouth, and that a few supper parties at Saint Boniface would not be unpleasant. And Major Pendennis longed to be off, and have a little pheasant-shooting at Stillbrook, and get rid of all the annoyances and *tracasseries* of the village. The widow and Laura nervously set about the preparations for Pen's kit, and filled trunks with his books and linen.

Helen wrote cards with the name of Arthur Pendennis, Esq., which were duly nailed on the boxes; and at which both she and Laura looked with tearful, wistful eyes. It was not until long, long after he was gone, that Pen remembered how constant and tender the affection of these women had been, and how selfish his own conduct was.

A night soon comes, when the mail, with echoing horn and blazing lamps, stops at the lodge-gate of Fairoaks, and Pen's trunks and his Uncle's are placed on the roof of the carriage, into which the pair presently afterwards enter. Helen and Laura are standing by the evergreens of the shrubbery, their figures lighted up by the coach lamps; the guard cries "all right:" in another instant the carriage whirls onward; the lights disappear, and Helen's heart and prayers go with them. Her sainted benedictions follow the departing boy. He has left the home-nest in which he has been chafing, and whither, after his very first flight, he returned bleeding and wounded; he is eager to go forth again and try his restless wings.

How lonely the house looks without him! The corded trunks and book-boxes are there in his empty study. Laura asks leave to come and sleep in Helen's room: and when she has cried herself to sleep there, the mother goes softly into Pen's vacant chamber, and kneels down by the bed on which the moon is shining, and there prays for her boy, as mothers only know how to plead. He knows that her pure blessings are following him, as he is carried miles away.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALMA MATER.

VERY man, however brief or inglorious may have been his academical career, must remember with kindness and tenderness the old university comrades and days. The young man's life is just beginning: the boy's leading strings are cut, and he has all the novel delights and dignities of freedom. He has no idea of cares yet, or of bad health, or of roguery, or poverty, or to-morrow's disappointment. The play has not been acted so often as to make him tired. Though the after-drink, as we mechanically go on repeating it, is stale and bitter, how pure and brilliant was that first sparkling draught of pleasure!—How the boy rushes at the cup, and with what a wild eagerness he drains it! But old epicures who are cut off from the delights of the table, and are restricted to a poached egg and a glass of water, like to see people with good appetites; and, as the next best thing to being amused at a pantomime one's-self is to see one's children enjoy it, I hope there may be no degree of age or experience to which mortal may attain, when he shall become such a glum philosopher, as not to be pleased by the sight of happy youth. Coming back a few weeks since from a brief visit to the old University of Oxbridge, where my friend Mr. Arthur Pendennis passed some period of his life, I made the journey in the railroad by the side of a young fellow at present a student of Saint Boniface. He had got an *exeat* somehow, and was bent on a day's lark in London: he never stopped rattling and talking from the commencement of the journey until its close

(which was a great deal too soon for me, for I never was tired of listening to the honest young fellow's jokes and cheery laughter); and when we arrived at the terminus nothing would satisfy him but a Hansom cab, so that he might get into town the quicker, and plunge into the pleasures awaiting him there. Away the young lad went whirling, with joy lighting up his honest face; and as for the reader's humble servant, having but a small carpet-bag, I got up on the outside of the omnibus, and sate there very contentedly between a Jew-pedlar smoking bad cigars, and a gentleman's servant taking care of a poodle-dog, until we got our fated complement of passengers and boxes, when the coachman drove leisurely away. *We* weren't in a hurry to get to town. Neither one of us was particularly eager about rushing into that near smoking Babylon, or thought of dining at the Club that night, or dancing at the Casino. Yet a few years more, and my young friend of the railroad will be not a whit more eager.

There were no railroads made when Arthur Pendennis went to the famous University of Oxbridge; but he drove thither in a well-appointed coach, filled inside and out with dons, gownsmen, young freshmen about to enter, and their guardians, who were conducting them to the university. A fat old gentleman, in grey stockings, from the City, who sate by Major Pendennis inside the coach, having his pale-faced son opposite, was frightened beyond measure, when he heard that the coach had been driven for a couple of stages by young Mr. Foker, of Saint Boniface College, who was the friend of all men, including coachmen, and could drive as well as Tom Hicks himself. Pen sate on the roof, examining coach, passengers, and country, with great delight and curiosity. His heart jumped with pleasure as the famous university came in view, and the magnificent prospect of venerable towers and pinnacles, tall elms and shining river, spread before him.

Pen had passed a few days with his uncle at the Major's lodgings, in Bury Street, before they set out for Oxbridge. Major Pendennis thought that the lad's wardrobe wanted renewal; and Arthur was by no means averse to any plan which was to bring him new coats and waistcoats. There was no end to the sacrifices which the self-denying uncle made in the youth's behalf. London was awfully lonely. The Pall Mall pavement was deserted; the very red-jackets had gone out of town. There was scarce a face to be seen in the bow-windows of the clubs. The Major conducted his nephew into one or two of those desert mansions, and wrote down the lad's name on the candidate-list of one of them; and Arthur's pleasure at this compliment on his

guardian's part was excessive. He read in the parchment volume his name and titles, as "Arthur Pendennis, Esquire, of Fairoaks Lodge, ——shire, and Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge; proposed by Major Pendennis, and seconded by Viscount Colchicum," with a thrill of intense gratification. "You will come in for ballot in about three years, by which time you will have taken your degree," the guardian said. Pen longed for the three years to be over, and surveyed the stucco-halls, and vast libraries, and drawing-rooms, as already his own property. The Major laughed slily to see the pompous airs of the simple young fellow, as he strutted out of the building. He and Foker drove down in the latter's cab one day to the Grey Friars, and renewed acquaintance with some of their old comrades there. The boys came crowding up to the cab as it stood by the Grey Friars gates, where they were entering, and admired the chestnut horse, and the tights and livery and gravity of Stoopid, the tiger. The bell for afternoon-school rang as they were swaggering about the playground talking to their old cronies. The awful Doctor passed into school with his grammar in his hand. Foker slunk away uneasily at his presence, but Pen went up blushing, and shook the dignitary by the hand. He laughed as he thought that well-remembered Latin Grammar had boxed his ears many a time. He was generous, good-natured, and, in a word, perfectly conceited and satisfied with himself.

Then they drove to the parental brewhouse. Foker's Entire is composed in an enormous pile of buildings, not far from the Grey Friars, and the name of that well-known firm is gilded upon innumerable public-house signs, tenanted by its vassals in the neighbourhood: the venerable junior partner and manager did honour to the young lord of the vats and his friend, and served them with silver flagons of brown-stout, so strong, that you would have thought, not only the young men, but the very horse Mr. Harry Foker drove, was affected by the potency of the drink, for he rushed home to the west-end of the town at a rapid pace, which endangered the pie-stalls and the women on the crossings, and brought the cab-steps into collision with the posts at the street corners, and caused Stoopid to swing fearfully on his board behind.

The Major was quite pleased when Pen was with his young acquaintance; listened to Mr. Foker's artless stories with the greatest interest: gave the two boys a fine dinner at a Covent Garden Coffee-house, whence they proceeded to the play; but was above all happy when Mr. and Lady Agnes Foker, who happened to be in London, requested the pleasure of Major Pendennis and Mr. Arthur Pendennis's

company at dinner in Grosvenor Street. "Having obtained the *entrée* into Lady Agnes Foker's house," he said to Pen with an affectionate solemnity which befitted the importance of the occasion, "it behoves you, my dear boy, to keep it. You must mind and *never* neglect to call in Grosvenor Street when you come to London. I recommend you to read up carefully, in Debrett, the alliances and genealogy of the Earls of Rosherville, and if you can, to make some trifling allusions to the family, something historical, neat, and complimentary, and that sort of thing, which you, who have a poetic fancy, can do pretty well. Mr. Foker himself is a worthy man, though not of high extraction or indeed much education. He always makes a point of having some of the family porter served round after dinner, which you will on no account refuse, and which I shall drink myself, though *all* beer disagrees with me confoundedly." And the heroic martyr did actually sacrifice himself, as he said he would, on the day when the dinner took place, and old Mr. Foker, at the head of his table, made his usual joke about Foker's Entire. We should all of us, I am sure, have liked to see the Major's grin, when the worthy old gentleman made his time-honoured joke.

Lady Agnes, who, wrapped up in Harry, was the fondest of mothers, and one of the most good-natured though not the wisest of women, received her son's friend with great cordiality; and astonished Pen by accounts of the severe course of studies which her darling boy was pursuing, and which she feared might injure his dear health. Foker the elder burst into a horse-laugh at some of these speeches, and the heir of the house winked his eye very knowingly at his friend. And Lady Agnes then going through her son's history from the earliest time, and recounting his miraculous sufferings in the measles and whooping-cough, his escape from drowning, the shocking tyrannies practised upon him at that horrid school, whither Mr. Foker would send him because he had been brought up there himself, and she never would forgive that disagreeable Doctor, no, never—Lady Agnes, we say, having prattled away for an hour incessantly about her son, voted the two Messieurs Pendennis most agreeable men; and when the pheasants came with the second course, which the Major praised as the very finest birds he ever saw, her Ladyship said they came from Logwood (as the Major knew perfectly well) and hoped that they would both pay her a visit there—at Christmas, or when dear Harry was at home for the vacations.

"God bless you, my dear boy," Pendennis said to Arthur as they were lighting their candles in Bury Street afterwards to go to bed.

"You made that little allusion to Agincourt, where one of the Roshervilles distinguished himself, very neatly and well, although Lady Agnes did not quite understand it: but it was exceedingly well for a beginner —though you oughtn't to blush so, by the way—and I beseech you, my dear Arthur, to remember through life, that with an *entrée*—with a good *entrée*, mind—it is just as easy for you to have good society as bad, and that it costs a man, when properly introduced, no more trouble or *soins* to keep a good footing in the best houses in London than to dine with a lawyer in Bedford Square. Mind this when you are at Oxbridge pursuing your studies, and for Heaven's sake be *very* particular in the acquaintances which you make. The *premier pas* in life is the most important of all—did you write to your mother to-day?—No?—well, do, before you go, and call and ask Mr. Foker for a frank—They like it—Good night. God bless you."

Pen wrote a droll account of his doings in London, and the play, and the visit to the old Friars, and the brewery, and the party at Mr. Foker's, to his dearest mother, who was saying her prayers at home in the lonely house at Fairoaks, her heart full of love and tenderness unutterable for the boy: and she and Laura read that letter and those which followed, many, many times, and brooded over them as women do. It was the first step in life that Pen was making—Ah! what a dangerous journey it is, and how the bravest may stumble and the strongest fail. Brother wayfarer! may you have a kind arm to support yours on the path, and a friendly hand to succour those who fall beside you! May truth guide, mercy forgive at the end, and love accompany always! Without that lamp how blind the traveller would be, and how black and cheerless the journey!

So the coach drove up to that ancient and comfortable inn the Trencher, which stands in Main Street, Oxbridge, and Pen with delight and eagerness remarked, for the first time, gownsmen going about, chapel bells clinking (bells in Oxbridge are ringing from morning-tide till even-song,)—towers and pinnacles rising calm and stately over the gables and antique house-roofs of the city. Previous communications had taken place between Doctor Portman on Pen's part, and Mr. Buck, Tutor of Boniface, on whose side Pen was entered: and as soon as Major Pendennis had arranged his personal appearance, so that it should make a satisfactory impression upon Pen's tutor, the pair walked down Main Street, and passed the great gate and belfry-tower of Saint George's College, and so came, as they were directed, to Saint Boniface, where again Pen's heart began to beat as they entered at the wicket of the venerable ivy-mantled gate of the College. It is surmounted with

an ancient dome almost covered with creepers, and adorned with the effigy of the Saint from whom the House takes its name, and many coats-of-arms of its royal and noble benefactors.

The porter pointed out a queer old tower at the corner of the quadrangle, by which Mr. Buck's rooms were approached, and the two gentlemen walked across the square, the main features of which were at once and for ever stamped in Pen's mind—the pretty fountain playing in the centre of the fair grass plats ; the tall chapel windows and buttresses rising to the right ; the hall, with its tapering lantern and oriel window ; the lodge, from the doors of which the Master issued awfully in rustling silks : the lines of the surrounding rooms pleasantly broken by carved chimnies, grey turrets, and quaint gables —all these Mr. Pen's eyes drank in with an eagerness which belongs to first impressions ; and Major Pendennis surveyed with that calmness which belongs to a gentleman who does not care for the picturesque, and whose eyes have been somewhat dimmed by the constant glare of the pavement of Pall Mall.

Saint George's is the great College of the University of Oxbridge, with its four vast quadrangles, and its beautiful hall and gardens, and the Georgians, as the men are called, wear gowns of a peculiar cut, and give themselves no small airs of superiority over all other young men. Little Saint Boniface is but a petty hermitage in comparison of the huge consecrated pile alongside of which it lies. But considering its size it has always kept an excellent name in the university. Its *ton* is very good : the best families of certain counties have time out of mind sent up their young men to Saint Boniface : the college livings are remarkably good, the fellowships easy ; the Boniface men had had more than their fair share of university honours ; their boat was third upon the river ; their chapel-choir is not inferior to Saint George's itself ; and the Boniface ale the best in Oxbridge. In the comfortable old wainscotted College-Hall, and round about Roubilliac's statue of Saint Boniface (who stands in an attitude of seraphic benediction over the uncommonly good cheer of the fellows table) there are portraits of many most eminent Bonifacians. There is the learned Doctor Griddle, who suffered in Henry VIII.'s time, and Archbishop Bush who roasted him—there is Lord Chief Justice Hicks—the Duke of St. David's, K.G., Chancellor of the University and Member of this College—Sprott the Poet, of whose fame the college is justly proud—Doctor Blogg, the late master, and friend of Doctor Johnson, who visited him at Saint Boniface—and other lawyers, scholars, and divines, whose portraitures look from the walls, or whose coats-of-arms shine

in emerald and ruby, gold and azure, in the tall windows of the refectory. The venerable cook of the college is one of the best artists in Oxbridge, and the wine in the fellows' room has long been famed for its excellence and abundance.

Into this certainly not the least snugly sheltered arbour amongst the groves of Academe, Pen now found his way, leaning on his uncle's arm, and they speedily reached Mr. Buck's rooms, and were conducted into the apartment of that courteous gentleman.

He had received previous information from Doctor Portman regarding Pen, with respect to whose family, fortune, and personal merits the honest Doctor had spoken with no small enthusiasm. Indeed Portman had described Arthur to the tutor as "a young gentleman of some fortune and landed estate, of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom, and possessing such a character and genius as were sure, under proper guidance, to make him a credit to the college and the university." Under such recommendations, the tutor was, of course, most cordial to the young freshman and his guardian, invited the latter to dine in hall, where he would have the satisfaction of seeing his nephew wear his gown and eat his dinner for the first time, and requested the pair to take wine at his rooms after hall, and in consequence of the highly-favourable report he had received of Mr. Arthur Pendennis, said he should be happy to give him the best set of rooms to be had in college—a gentleman-pensioner's set, indeed, which were just luckily vacant. When a College Magnate takes the trouble to be polite, there is no man more splendidly courteous. Immersed in their books, and excluded from the world by the gravity of their occupations, these reverend men assume a solemn magnificence of compliment in which they rustle and swell as in their grand robes of state. Those silks and brocades are not put on for all comers or every day.

When the two gentlemen had taken leave of the tutor in his study, and had returned to Mr. Buck's ante-room, or lecture-room, a very handsome apartment, turkey-carpeted, and hung with excellent prints and richly framed pictures, they found the tutor's servant already in waiting there, accompanied by a man with a bag full of caps and a number of gowns, from which Pen might select a cap and gown for himself, and the servant, no doubt, would get a commission proportionable to the service done by him. Mr. Pen was all in a tremor of pleasure as the bustling tailor tried on a gown, and pronounced that it was an excellent fit; and then he put the pretty college cap on, in rather a dandified manner, and somewhat on one side, as he had seen Fiddicombe, the youngest master at Grey Friars, wear it. And he

inspected the entire costume with a great deal of satisfaction in one of the great gilt mirrors which ornamented Mr. Buck's lecture-room: for some of these college divines are no more above looking-glasses than a lady is, and look to the set of their gowns and caps quite as anxiously as folks do of the lovelier sex.

Then Davis, the skip or attendant, led the way, keys in hand, across the quadrangle, the Major and Pen following him, the latter

blushing, and pleased with his new academical habiliments, across the quadrangle to the rooms which were destined for the freshman; and which were vacated by the retreat of the gentleman-pensioner, Mr. Spicer. The rooms were very comfortable, with large cross beams, high wainscots, and small windows in deep embrasures. Mr. Spicer's furniture was there, and to be sold at a valuation, and Major Pendennis agreed on his nephew's behalf to take the available part of it,

laughingly however declining (as, indeed, Pen did for his own part) six sporting prints, and four groups of opera-dancers with gauze draperies, which formed the late occupant's pictorial collection.

Then they went to hall, where Pen sate down and ate his commons with his brother freshmen, and the Major took his place at the high-table along with the college dignitaries and other fathers or guardians of youth, who had come up with their sons to Oxbridge; and after all they went to Mr. Buck's to take wine; and after wine to chapel, where the Major sate with great gravity in the upper place, having a fine view of the Master in his carved throne or stall under the organ-loft, where that gentleman, the learned Doctor Donne, sate magnificent, with his great prayer-book before him, an image of statuesque piety and rigid devotion. All the young freshmen behaved with gravity and decorum, but Pen was shocked to see that atrocious little Foker, who came in very late, and half-a-dozen of his comrades in the gentlemen-pensioners' seats, giggling and talking as if they had been in so many stalls at the Opera.

Pen could hardly sleep at night in his bed-room at the Trencher; so anxious was he to begin his college life, and to get into his own apartments. What did he think about, as he lay tossing and awake? Was it about his mother at home; the pious soul whose life was bound up in his? Yes, let us hope he thought of her a little. Was it about Miss Fotheringay, and his eternal passion, which had kept him awake so many nights, and created such wretchedness and such longing? He had a trick of blushing, and if you had been in the room, and the candle had not been out, you might have seen the youth's countenance redden more than once, as he broke out into passionate incoherent exclamations regarding that luckless event of his life. His uncle's lessons had not been thrown away upon him; the mist of passion had passed from his eyes now, and he saw her as she was. To think that he, Pendennis, had been enslaved by such a woman, and then jilted by her! that he should have stooped so low, to be trampled on in the mire! that there was a time in his life, and that but a few months back, when he was willing to take Costigan for his father-in-law!—

"Poor old Smirke!" Pen presently laughed out—"well, I'll write and try and console the poor old boy. He won't die of his passion, ha, ha!" The Major, had he been awake, might have heard a score of such ejaculations uttered by Pen as he lay awake and restless through the first night of his residence at Oxbridge.

It would, perhaps, have been better for a youth, the battle of

whose life was going to begin on the morrow, to have passed the eve in a different sort of vigil : but the world had got hold of Pen in the shape of his selfish old Mentor : and those who have any interest in his character, must have perceived ere now, that this lad was very weak as well as very impetuous, very vain as well as very frank, and if of a generous disposition, not a little selfish, in the midst of his profuseness, and also rather fickle, as all eager pursuers of self-gratification are.

The six-months' passion had aged him very considerably. There was an immense gulf between Pen the victim of love, and Pen the innocent boy of eighteen, sighing after it : and so Arthur Pendennis had all the experience and superiority, besides that command which afterwards conceit and imperiousness of disposition gave him over the young men with whom he now began to live.

He and his uncle passed the morning with great satisfaction in making purchases for the better comfort of the apartments which the lad was about to occupy. Mr. Spicer's china and glass were in a dreadfully dismantled condition, his lamps smashed, and his book-cases by no means so spacious as those shelves which would be requisite to receive the contents of the boxes which were lying in the hall at Fairoaks, and which were addressed to Arthur in the hand of poor Helen.

The boxes arrived in a few days, that his mother had packed with so much care. Pen was touched as he read the superscriptions in the dear well-known hand, and he arranged in their proper places all the books, his old friends, and all the linen and table-cloths which Helen had selected from the family stock, and all the jam-pots which little Laura had bound in straw, and the hundred simple gifts of home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PENDENNIS OF BONIFACE.

OUR friend Pen was not sorry when his Mentor took leave of the young gentleman on the second day after the arrival of the pair in Oxbridge, and we may be sure that the Major on his part was very glad to have discharged his duty, and to have the duty over. More than three months of precious time had that martyr of a Major given up to his nephew—Was ever selfish man called upon to make a greater sacrifice? Do you know many men or Majors who would do as much? A man will lay down his head, or peril his life for his honour, but let us be shy how we ask him to give up his ease or his heart's desire. Very few of us can bear that trial. Let us give the Major due credit for his conduct during the past quarter, and own that he has quite a right to be pleased at getting a holiday. Foker and Pen saw him off in the coach, and the former youth gave particular orders to the coachman to take care of that gentleman inside. It pleased the elder Pendennis to have his nephew in the company of a young fellow who would introduce him to the best set of the university. The Major rushed off to London and thence to Cheltenham, from which watering-place he descended upon some neighbouring great houses, whereof the families were not gone abroad, and where good shooting and company were to be had.

We are not about to go through young Pen's academical career very minutely. Alas, the life of such boys does not bear telling alto-

gether! I wish it did. I ask you, does yours? As long as what we call our honour is clear, I suppose your mind is pretty easy. Women are pure, but not men. Women are unselfish, but not men. And I would not wish to say of poor Arthur Pendennis that he was worse than his neighbours, only that his neighbours are bad for the most part. Let us have the candour to own as much at least. Can you point out ten spotless men of your acquaintance? Mine is pretty large, but I can't find ten saints in the list.

During the first term of Mr. Pen's university life, he attended classical and mathematical lectures with tolerable assiduity; but discovering before very long time that he had little taste or genius for the pursuing of the exact sciences, and being perhaps rather annoyed that one or two very vulgar young men, who did not even use straps to their trousers so as to cover the abominably thick and coarse shoes and stockings which they wore, beat him completely in the lecture-room, he gave up his attendance at that course, and announced to his fond parent that he proposed to devote himself exclusively to the cultivation of Greek and Roman Literature.

Mrs. Pendennis was, for her part, quite satisfied that her darling boy should pursue that branch of learning for which he had the greatest inclination; and only besought him not to ruin his health by too much study, for she had heard the most melancholy stories of young students who, by over fatigue, had brought on brain-fevers and perished untimely in the midst of their university career. And Pen's health, which was always delicate, was to be regarded, as she justly said, beyond all considerations or vain honours. Pen, although not aware of any lurking disease which was likely to endanger his life, yet kindly promised his mamma not to sit up reading too late of nights, and stuck to his word in this respect with a great deal more tenacity of resolution than he exhibited upon some other occasions, when perhaps he was a little remiss.

Presently he began, too, to find that he learned little good in the classical lecture. His fellow-students there were too dull, as in mathematics they were too learned for him. Mr. Buck, the tutor, was no better a scholar than many a fifth-form boy at Grey Friars; might have some stupid humdrum notions about the metre and grammatical construction of a passage of Æschylus or Aristophanes, but had no more notion of the poetry than Mrs. Binge, his bed-maker: and Pen grew weary of hearing the dull students and tutor blunder through a few lines of a play, which he could read in a tenth part of the time which they gave to it. After all, private reading, as he began to

perceive, was the only study which was really profitable to a man; and he announced to his mamma that he should read by himself a great deal more, and in public a great deal less. That excellent woman knew no more about Homer than she did about Algebra, but she was quite contented with Pen's arrangements regarding his course of studies, and felt perfectly confident that her dear boy would get the place which he merited.

Pen did not come home until after Christmas, a little to the fond mother's disappointment, and Laura's, who was longing for him to make a fine snow fortification, such as he had made three winters before. But he was invited to Logwood, Lady Agnes Foker's, where there were private theatricals, and a gay Christmas party of very fine folks, some of them whom Major Pendennis would on no account have his nephew neglect. However, he stayed at home for the last three weeks of the vacation, and Laura had the opportunity of remarking what a quantity of fine new clothes he brought with him, and his mother admired his improved appearance and manly and decided tone.

He did not come home at Easter; but when he arrived for the long vacation, he brought more smart clothes; appearing in the morning in wonderful shooting-jackets, with remarkable buttons; and in the evening in gorgeous velvet waistcoats, with richly embroidered cravats, and curious linen. And as she pried about his room, she saw, oh, such a beautiful dressing-case, with silver mountings, and a quantity of lovely rings and jewellery. And he had a new French watch and gold chain, in place of the big old chronometer, with its bunch of jingling seals, which had hung from the fob of John Pendennis, and by the second-hand of which the defunct doctor had felt many a patient's pulse in his time. It was but a few months back Pen had longed for this watch, which he thought the most splendid and august time-piece in the world; and just before he went to college, Helen had taken it out of her trinket-box (where it had remained unwound since the death of her husband) and given it to Pen with a solemn and appropriate little speech respecting his father's virtues and the proper use of time. This portly and valuable chronometer Pen now pronounced to be out of date, and indeed, made some comparisons between it and a warming-pan, which Laura thought disrespectful, and he left the watch in a drawer, in the company of soiled primrose gloves, cravats which had gone out of favour, and of that other school watch which has once before been mentioned in this history. Our old friend, Rebecca, Pen pronounced to be no longer up to his weight, and swopped her away

for another and more powerful horse, for which he had to pay rather a heavy figure. Mrs. Pendennis gave the boy the money for the new horse; and Laura cried when Rebecca was fetched away.

Also Pen brought a large box of cigars branded *Colorados*, *Afrancesados*, *Telescopios*, Fudson Oxford Street, or by some such strange titles, and began to consume these not only about the stables and green-houses, where they were very good for Helen's plants, but in his own study,—which practice his mother did not at first approve. But he was at work upon a prize-poem, he said, and could not compose without his cigar, and quoted the late lamented Lord Byron's lines in favour of the custom of smoking. As he was smoking to such good purpose, his mother could not of course refuse permission: in fact, the good soul coming into the room one day in the midst of Pen's labours (he was consulting a novel which had recently appeared, for the cultivation of the light literature of his own country as well as of foreign nations. became every student)—Helen, we say, coming into the room and finding Pen on the sofa at this work, rather than disturb him went for a light-box and his cigar-case to his bed-room which was adjacent, and actually put the cigar into his mouth and lighted the match at which he kindled it. Pen laughed, and kissed his mother's hand as it hung fondly over the back of the sofa. "Dear old mother," he said, "if I were to tell you to burn the house down, I think you would do it." And it is very likely that Mr. Pen was right, and that the foolish woman would have done almost as much for him as he said.

Besides the works of English "light literature" which this diligent student devoured, he brought down boxes of the light literature of the neighbouring country of France: into the leaves of which when Helen dipped, she read such things as caused her to open her eyes with wonder. But Pen showed her that it was not he who made the books, though it was absolutely necessary that he should keep up his French by an acquaintance with the most celebrated writers of the day, and that it was as clearly his duty to read the eminent Paul de Kock, as to study Swift or Molière. And Mrs. Pendennis yielded with a sigh of perplexity. But Miss Laura was warned off the books, both by his anxious mother, and that rigid moralist Mr. Arthur Pendennis himself, who, however *he* might be called upon to study every branch of literature in order to form his mind and to perfect his style, would by no means prescribe such a course of reading to a young lady whose business in life was very different.

In the course of this long vacation Mr. Pen drank up the bin of

claret which his father had laid in, and of which we have heard the son remark that there was not a headache in a hogshead; and this wine being exhausted, he wrote for a further supply to "his wine merchants," Messrs. Binney and Latham of Mark Lane, London: from whom, indeed, old Doctor Portman had recommended Pen to get a supply of port and sherry on going to college. "You will have, no doubt, to entertain your young friends at Boniface with wine parties," the honest rector had remarked to the lad. "They used to be customary at college in my time, and I would advise you to employ an honest and respectable house in London for your small stock of wine, rather than to have recourse to the Oxbridge tradesmen, whose liquor, if I remember rightly, was both deleterious in quality and exorbitant in price." And the obedient young gentleman took the Doctor's advice, and patronised Messrs. Binney and Latham at the rector's suggestion.

So when he wrote orders for a stock of wine to be sent down to the cellars at Fairoaks, he hinted that Messrs. B. and L. might send in his university account for wine at the same time with the Fairoaks bill. The poor widow was frightened at the amount. But Pen laughed at her old-fashioned views, said that the bill was moderate, that everybody drank claret and champagne now, and, finally, the widow paid, feeling dimly that the expenses of her household were increasing considerably, and that her narrow income would scarce suffice to meet them. But they were only occasional. Pen merely came home for a few weeks at the vacation. Laura and she might pinch when he was gone. In the brief time he was with them ought they not to make him happy?

Arthur's own allowances were liberal all this time; indeed, much more so than those of the sons of far more wealthy men. Years before, the thrifty and affectionate John Pendennis, whose darling project it had ever been to give his son a university education, and those advantages of which his own father's extravagance had deprived him, had begun laying by a store of money which he called Arthur's Education Fund. Year after year in his book his executors found entries of sums vested as A.E.F., and during the period subsequent to her husband's decease, and before Pen's entry at college, the widow had added sundry sums to this fund, so that when Arthur went up to Oxbridge it reached no inconsiderable amount. Let him be liberally allowanced, was Major Pendennis's maxim. Let him make his first *entrée* into the world as a gentleman, and take his place with men of good rank and station; after giving it to him, it will be his own duty

to hold it. There is no such bad policy as stinting a boy—or putting him on a lower allowance than his fellows. Arthur will have to face the world and fight for himself presently. Meanwhile we shall have procured for him good friends, gentlemanly habits, and have him well backed and well trained against the time when the real struggle comes. And these liberal opinions the Major probably advanced both because they were just, and because he was not dealing with his own money.

Thus young Pen, the only son of an estated country gentleman, with a good allowance, and a gentlemanlike bearing and person, looked to be a lad of much more consequence than he was really; and was held by the Oxbridge authorities, tradesmen, and undergraduates, as quite a young buck and member of the aristocracy. His manner was frank, brave, and perhaps a little impertinent, as becomes a high-spirited youth. He was perfectly generous and free-handed with his money, which seemed pretty plentiful. He loved joviality, and had a good voice for a song. Boat-racing had not risen in Pen's time to the *fureur* which, as we are given to understand, it has since attained in the university; and riding and tandem-driving were the fashions of the ingenuous youth. Pen rode well to hounds, appeared in pink, as became a young buck, and not particularly extravagant in equestrian or any other amusement, yet managed to run up a fine bill at Nile's, the livery stable-keeper, and in a number of other quarters. In fact, this lucky young gentleman had almost every taste to a considerable degree. He was very fond of books of all sorts: Doctor Portman had taught him to like rare editions, and his own taste led him to like beautiful bindings. It was marvellous what tall copies, and gilding, and marbling, and blind-tooling, the booksellers and binders put upon Pen's bookshelves. He had a very fair taste in matters of art, and a keen relish for prints of a high school —none of your French Opera Dancers, or tawdry Racing Prints, such as had delighted the simple eyes of Mr. Spicer, his predecessor —but your Stranges, and Rembrandt etchings, and Wilkies before the letter, with which his apartments were furnished presently in the most perfect good taste, as was allowed in the university, where this young fellow got no small reputation. We have mentioned that he exhibited a certain partiality for rings, jewellery, and fine raiment of all sorts; and it must be owned that Mr. Pen, during his time at the university, was rather a dressy man, and loved to array himself in splendour. He and his polite friends would dress themselves out with as much care in order to go and dine at each other's rooms, as other folks would

who were going to enslave a mistress. They said he used to wear rings over his kid gloves, which he always denies; but what follies will not youth perpetrate with its own admirable gravity and simplicity? That he took perfumed baths is a truth; and he used to say that he took them after meeting certain men of a very low set in hall.

In Pen's second year, when Miss Fotheringay made her chief hit in London, and scores of prints were published of her, Pen had one of these hung in his bed-room, and confided to the men of his set

how awfully, how wildly, how madly, how passionately, he had loved that woman. He showed them in confidence the verses that he had written to her, and his brow would darken, his eyes roll, his chest heave with emotion as he recalled that fatal period of his life, and described the woes and agonies which he had suffered. The verses were copied out, handed about, sneered at, admired, passed from coterie to coterie. There are few things which elevate a lad in the estimation of his brother boys, more than to have a character for a *great* and romantic passion. Perhaps there is something noble in it

at all times—among very young men, it is considered heroic—Pen was pronounced a tremendous fellow. They said he had almost committed suicide: that he had fought a duel with a baronet about her. Freshmen pointed him out to each other. As at the promenade time at two o'clock he swaggered out of college, surrounded by his cronies, he was famous to behold. He was elaborately attired. He would ogle the ladies who came to lionise the University, and passed before him on the arms of happy gownsmen, and give his opinion upon their personal charms, or their toilettes, with the gravity of a critic whose experience entitled him to speak with authority. Men used to say that they had been walking with Pendennis, and were as pleased to be seen in his company as some of us would be if we walked with a duke down Pall Mall. He and the Proctor capped each other as they met, as if they were rival powers, and the men hardly knew which was the greater.

In fact, in the course of his second year, Arthur Pendennis had become one of the men of fashion in the university. It is curious to watch that facile admiration, and simple fidelity of youth. They hang round a leader: and wonder at him, and love him, and imitate him. No generous boy ever lived, I suppose, that has not had some wonderment of admiration for another boy; and Monsieur Pen at Oxbridge had his school, his faithful band of friends, and his rivals. When the young men heard at the haberdashers' shops that Mr. Pendennis of Boniface had just ordered a crimson satin cravat, you would see a couple of dozen crimson satin cravats in Main Street in the course of the week—and Simon, the jeweller, was known to sell no less than two gross of Pendennis' pins, from a pattern which the young gentleman had selected in his shop.

Now if any person with an arithmetical turn of mind will take the trouble to calculate what a sum of money it would cost a young man to indulge freely in all the above propensities which we have said Mr. Pen possessed, it will be seen that a young fellow, with such liberal tastes and amusements, must needs in the course of two or three years spend or owe a very handsome sum of money. We have said our friend Pen had not a calculating turn. No one propensity of his was outrageously extravagant: and it is certain that Paddington's tailor's account; Guttlebury's cook's bill for dinners; Dilley Tandy's bill with Finn, the printseller, for Raphael-Morghens, and Landseer proofs; and Wormall's dealings with Parkton, the great bookseller, for Aldine editions, black-letter folios, and richly illuminated Missals of the XVI. Century; and Snaffle's or Foker's score with Nile the horse-

dealer, were, each and all of them, incomparably greater than any little bills which Mr. Pen might run up with the above-mentioned tradesmen. But Pendennis of Boniface had the advantage over all these young gentlemen, his friends and associates, of a universality of taste: and whereas young Lord Paddington did not care two-pence for the most beautiful print, or to look into any gilt frame that had not a mirror within it; and Guttlebury did not mind in the least how he was dressed, and had an aversion for horse exercise, nay a terror of it; and Snaffle never read any printed works but the "Racing Calendar," or "Bell's Life," or cared for any manuscript except his greasy little scrawl of a betting-book:—our catholic-minded young friend occupied himself in every one of the branches of science or pleasure above-mentioned, and distinguished himself tolerably in each.

Hence young Pen got a prodigious reputation in the university, and was hailed as a sort of Crichton; and as for the English verse prize, in competition for which we have seen him busily engaged at Fairoaks, Jones of Jesus carried it that year certainly, but the undergraduates thought Pen's a much finer poem, and he had his verses printed at his own expense, and distributed in gilt morocco covers amongst his acquaintance. I found a copy of it lately in a dusty corner of Mr. Pen's bookcases, and have it before me this minute, bound up in a collection of old Oxbridge tracts, university statutes, prize poems by successful and unsuccessful candidates, declamations recited in the college chapel, speeches delivered at the Union Debating Society, and inscribed by Arthur with his name and college, Pendennis—Boniface; or presented to him by his affectionate friend Thompson or Jackson, the author. How strange the epigraphs look in those half-boyish hands, and what a thrill the sight of the documents gives one after the lapse of a few lustres! How fate, since that time, has removed some, estranged others, dealt awfully with all! Many a hand is cold that wrote those kindly memorials, and that we pressed in the confident and generous grasp of youthful friendship. What passions our friendships were in those old days, how artless and void of doubt! How the arm you were never tired of having linked in yours under the fair college avenues or by the river-side, where it washes Magdalen Gardens, or Christ Church Meadows, or winds by Trinity and King's, was withdrawn of necessity, when you entered presently the world, and each parted to push and struggle for himself through the great mob on the way through life! Are we the same men now that wrote those inscriptions—that read *those poems*? that delivered or heard those essays and speeches so

simple, so pompous, so ludicrously solemn ; parodied so artlessly from books, and spoken with smug chubby faces, and such an admirable aping of wisdom and gravity? Here is the book before me : it is scarcely fifteen years old. Here is Jack moaning with despair and Byronic misanthropy, whose career at the university was one of unmixed milk-punch. Here is Tom's daring essay in defence of suicide and of republicanism in general, *à propos* of the death of Roland and the Girondins—Tom's, who wears the starchest tie in all the diocese, and would go to Smithfield, rather than eat a beefsteak on a Friday in Lent. Here is Bob, of the —— Circuit, who has made a fortune in Railroad Committees,—bellowing out with Tancred and Godfrey, "On to the breach, ye soldiers of the cross, Scale the red wall and swim the choking foss. Ye dauntless archers, twang your cross-bows well ; On, bill and battle-axe and mangonel ! Ply battering ram and hurtling catapult, Jerusalem is ours—*id Deus vult.*" After which comes a mellifluous description of the gardens of Sharon and the maids of Salem, and a prophecy that roses shall deck the entire country of Syria, and a speedy reign of peace be established—all in undeniably decasyllabic lines, and the queerest aping of sense and sentiment and poetry. And there are Essays and Poems along with these grave parodies, and boyish exercises (which are at once frank and false, and so mirthful, yet, somehow, so mournful), by youthful hands, that shall never write more. Fate has interposed darkly, and the young voices are silent, and the eager brains have ceased to work. This one had genius and a great descent, and seemed to be destined for honours which now are of little worth to him : that had virtue, learning, genius —every faculty and endowment which might secure love, admiration, and worldly fame: an obscure and solitary churchyard contains the grave of many fond hopes, and the pathetic stone which bids them farewell. I saw the sun shining on it in the fall of last year, and heard the sweet village choir raising anthems round about. What boots whether it be Westminster or a little country spire which covers your ashes, or if, a few days sooner or later, the world forgets you?

Amidst these friends then, and a host more, Pen passed more than two brilliant and happy years of his life. He had his fill of pleasure and popularity. No dinner or supper party was complete without him ; and Pen's jovial wit, and Pen's songs, and dashing courage, and frank and manly bearing, charmed all the undergraduates. Though he became the favourite and leader of young men who were much his superiors in wealth and station, he was much too generous to endeavour to propitiate them by any meanness or cringing on his own part,

and would not neglect the humblest man of his acquaintance in order to curry favour with the richest young grandee in the university. His name is still remembered at the Union Debating Club, as one of the brilliant orators of his day. By the way, from having been an ardent Tory in his freshman's year, his principles took a sudden turn afterwards, and he became a Liberal of the most violent order. He avowed himself a Dantonist, and asserted that Louis the Sixteenth was served right. And as for Charles the First, he vowed that he would chop off that monarch's head with his own right hand were he then in the room at the Union Debating Club, and had Cromwell no other executioner for the traitor. He and Lord Magnus Charters, the Marquis of Runnymede's son, before-mentioned, were the most truculent republicans of their day.

There are reputations of this sort made quite independent of the collegiate hierarchy, in the republic of gownsmen. A man may be famous in the Honour-lists and entirely unknown to the undergraduates: who elect kings and chieftains of their own, whom they admire and obey, as negro-gangs have private black sovereigns in their own body, to whom they pay an occult obedience, besides that which they publicly profess for their owners and drivers. Among the young ones Pen became famous and popular: not that he did much, but there was a general determination that he could do a great deal if he chose. "Ah, if Pendennis of Boniface would but try," the men said, "he might do anything." He was backed for the Greek Ode won by Smith of Trinity; everybody was sure he would have the Latin hexameter prize which Brown of St. John's, however, carried off, and in this way one university honour after another was lost by him, until, after two or three failures, Mr. Pen ceased to compete. But he got a declamation prize in his own college, and brought home to his mother and Laura at Fairoaks a set of prize-books begilt with the college arms, and so big, well-bound, and magnificent, that these ladies thought there had been no such prize ever given in a college before as this of Pen's, and that he had won the very largest honour which Oxbridge was capable of awarding.

As vacation after vacation and term after term passed away without the desired news that Pen had sate for any scholarship or won any honour, Doctor Portman grew mightily gloomy in his behaviour towards Arthur, and adopted a sulky grandeur of deportment towards him, which the lad returned by a similar haughtiness. One vacation he did not call upon the Doctor at all, much to his mother's annoyance, who thought that it was a privilege to enter the Rectory-house

at Clavering, and listened to Doctor Portman's antique jokes and stories, though ever so often repeated, with unfailing veneration. "I cannot stand the Doctor's patronising air," Pen said. "He's too kind to me, a great deal too fatherly. I have seen in the world better men than him, and I am not going to bore myself by listening to his dull old stories." The tacit feud between Pen and the Doctor made the widow nervous, so that she too avoided Portman, and was afraid to go to the Rectory when Arthur was at home.

One Sunday in the last long vacation, the wretched boy pushed his rebellious spirit so far as not to go to church, and he was seen at the gate of the Clavering Arms smoking a cigar, in the face of the congregation as it issued from St. Mary's. There was an awful sensation in the village society, Portman prophesied Pen's ruin after that, and groaned in spirit over the rebellious young prodigal.

So did Helen tremble in her heart, and little Laura—Laura had grown to be a fine young stripling by this time, graceful and fair, clinging round Helen and worshipping her, with a passionate affection. Both of these women felt that their boy was changed. He was no longer the artless Pen of old days, so brave, so artless, so impetuous, and tender. His face looked careworn and haggard, his voice had a deeper sound, and tones more sarcastic. Care seemed to be pursuing him; but he only laughed when his mother questioned him, and parried her anxious queries with some scornful jest. Nor did he spend much of his vacations at home; he went on visits to one great friend or another, and scared the quiet pair at Fairoaks by stories of great houses whither he had been invited, and by talking of lords without their titles.

Honest Harry Foker, who had been the means of introducing Arthur Pendennis to that set of young men at the university, from whose society and connections Arthur's uncle expected that the lad would get so much benefit; who had called for Arthur's first song at his first supper-party; and who had presented him at the Barmecide Club, where none but the very best men of Oxbridge were admitted (it consisted in Pen's time of six noblemen, eight gentlemen-pensioners, and twelve of the most select commoners of the university), soon found himself left far behind by the young freshman in the fashionable world of Oxbridge, and being a generous and worthy fellow, without a spark of envy in his composition, was exceedingly pleased at the success of his young *protégé*, and admired Pen quite as much as any of the other youth did. It was he who followed Pen now, and quoted his sayings; learned his songs, and retailed them

at minor supper-parties, and was never weary of hearing them from the gifted young poet's own mouth—for a good deal of the time which Mr. Pen might have employed much more advantageously in the pursuit of the regular scholastic studies, was given up to the composition of secular ballads, which he sang about at parties according to university wont.

It had been as well for Arthur if the honest Foker had remained for some time at college, for, with all his vivacity, he was a prudent young man, and often curbed Pen's propensity to extravagance : but Foker's collegiate career did not last very long after Arthur's entrance at Boniface. Repeated differences with the university authorities caused Mr. Foker to quit Oxbridge in an untimely manner. He would persist in attending races on the neighbouring Hungerford Heath, in spite of the injunctions of his academic superiors. He never could be got to frequent the chapel of the college with that regularity of piety which Alma Mater demands from her children ; tandems, which are abominations in the eyes of the heads and tutors, were Foker's greatest delight, and so reckless was his driving and frequent the accidents and upsets out of his drag, that Pen called taking a drive with him taking the "Diversions of Purley ;" finally, having a dinner-party at his rooms to entertain some friends from London, nothing would satisfy Mr. Foker but painting Mr. Buck's door vermilion, in which freak he was caught by the proctor ; and although young Black Strap, the celebrated negro-fighter, who was one of Mr. Foker's distinguished guests, and was holding the can of paint while the young artist operated on the door, knocked down two of the proctor's attendants and performed prodigies of valour, yet these feats rather injured than served Foker, whom the proctor knew very well and who was taken with the brush in his hand, summarily convened, and sent down from the university.

The tutor wrote a very kind and feeling letter to Lady Agnes on the subject, stating that everybody was fond of the youth ; that he never meant harm to any mortal creature : that he for his own part would have been delighted to pardon the harmless little boyish frolic, had not its unhappy publicity rendered it impossible to look the freak over, and breathing the most fervent wishes for the young fellow's welfare—wishes no doubt sincere, for Foker, as we know, came of a noble family on his mother's side, and on the other was heir to a great number of thousand pounds a year.

"It don't matter," said Foker, talking over the matter with Pen, —"a little sooner or a little later, what is the odds? I should have

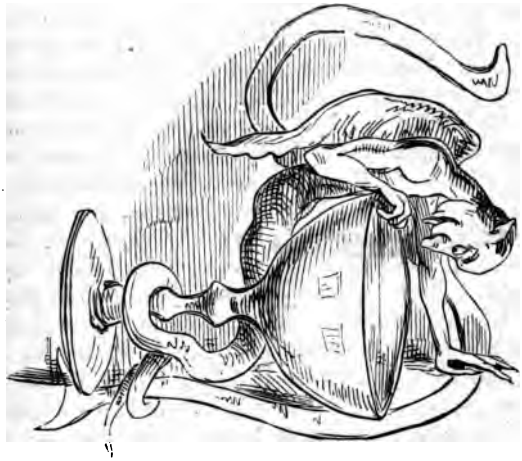
been plucked for my little go again, I know I should—that Latin I cannot screw into my head, and my mamma's anguish would have broke out next term. The Governor will blow like an old grampus, I know he will,—well, we must stop till he gets his wind again. I shall probably go abroad and improve my mind with foreign travel. Yes, *parly voo's* the ticket. It'ly and that sort of thing. I'll go to Paris, and learn to dance and complete my education. But it's not me I'm anxious about, Pen. As long as people drink beer I don't care,—it's about you I'm doubtful, my boy. You're going too fast, and can't keep up the pace, I tell you. It's not the fifty you owe me —pay it or not when you like,—but it's the every-day pace, and I tell you it will kill you. You're livin' as if there was no end to the money in the stockin' at home. You oughtn't to give dinners, you ought to eat 'em. Fellows are glad to have you. You oughtn't to owe horse bills, you ought to ride other chaps' nags. You know no more about betting than I do about algebra : the chaps will win your money as sure as you sport it. Hang me if you are not trying at everything. I saw you sit down to *écarté* last week at Trumpington's, and taking your turn with the bones after Ringwood's supper. They'll beat you at it, Pen my boy, even if they play on the square, which I don't say they don't, nor which I don't say they do, mind. But *I* won't play with 'em. You're no match for 'em. You ain't up to their weight. It's like little Black Strap standing up to Tom Spring,—the Black's a pretty fighter, but, Law bless you, his arm ain't long enough to touch Tom,—and I tell you, you're going it with fellers beyond your weight. Look here—If you'll promise me never to bet nor touch a box nor a card, I'll let you off the two ponies."

But Pen, laughingly, said, "that though it wasn't convenient to him to pay the two ponies at that moment, he by no means wished to be let off any just debts he owed ;" and he and Foker parted, not without many dark forebodings on the latter's part with regard to his friend, who Harry thought was travelling speedily on the road to ruin.

"One must do at Rome as Rome does," Pen said, in a dandified manner, jingling some sovereigns in his waistcoat pocket. "A little quiet play at *écarté* can't hurt a man who plays pretty well—I came away fourteen sovereigns richer from Ringwood's supper, and, gad ! I wanted the money."—And he walked off, after having taken leave of poor Foker, who went away without any beat of drum, or offer to drive the coach out of Oxbridge, to superintend a little dinner which he was going to give at his own rooms in Boniface, about which dinners, the cook of the college, who had a great respect for Mr. Pendennis, always took especial pains for his young favourite.

CHAPTER XIX.

RAKE'S PROGRESS.



O in Pen's second year Major Pendennis paid a brief visit to his nephew, and was introduced to several of Pen's university friends—the gentle and polite Lord Plinlimmon, the gallant and open-hearted Magnus Charters, the sly and witty Harland; the intrepid Ringwood, who was called Rupert in the Union Debating Club, from his opinions and the bravery of his blunders; Broadbent, styled Barebones Broadbent from the republican nature of his opinions (he was of a dissenting family from Bristol, and a perfect Boanerges of debate); and Bloundell-Bloundell, whom Mr. Pen entertained at a dinner whereof his uncle was the chief guest.

The Major said, "Pen, my boy, your dinner went off *à merveille*; you did the honours very nicely—you carved well—I am glad you learned to carve—it is done on the sideboard now in most good houses, but it is still an important point, and may aid you in middle-life—young Lord Plinlimmon is a very amiable young man, quite the image of his dear mother (whom I knew as Lady Aquila Brownbill); and Lord Magnus's republicanism will wear off—it sits prettily enough on a young patrician in early life, though nothing is so loathsome

among persons of our rank—Mr. Broadbent seems to have much eloquence and considerable reading; your friend Foker is always delightful; but your acquaintance, Mr. Bloundell, struck me as in all respects a most ineligible young man."

"Bless my soul, sir, Bloundell-Bloundell!" cried Pen, laughing: "why, sir, he's the most popular man of the university. He was in the —— Dragoons before he came up. We elected him of the Barmecides the first week he came up—had a special meeting on purpose—he's of an excellent family—Suffolk Bloundels, descended from Richard's Blondel, bear a harp in chief—and motto O Mong Roy."

"A man may have a very good coat-of-arms, and be a tiger, my boy," the Major said, chipping his egg; "that man is a tiger, mark my word—a low man. I will lay a wager that he left his regiment, which was a good one (for a more respectable man than my friend, Lord Martingale, never sat in a saddle), in bad odour. There is the unmistakable look of slang and bad habits about this Mr. Bloundell. He frequents low gambling-houses and billiard hells, sir,—he haunts third-rate clubs—I know he does. I know by his style. I never was mistaken in my man yet. Did you remark the quantity of rings and jewellery he wore? That person has Scamp written on his countenance, if any man ever had. Mark my words and avoid him. Let us turn the conversation. The dinner was a *leetle* too fine, but I don't object to your making a few extra *frais* when you receive friends. Of course you don't do it often, and only those whom it is your interest to *fêter*. The cutlets were excellent, and the *soufflé* uncommonly light and good. The third bottle of champagne was not necessary; but you have a good income, and as long as you keep within it, I shall not quarrel with you, my dear boy."

Poor Pen! the worthy uncle little knew how often those dinners took place, while the reckless young Amphitryon delighted to show his hospitality and skill in *gourmandise*. There is no art about which boys are more anxious to have an air of knowingness. A taste and knowledge of wines and cookery appears to them to be the sign of an accomplished *roué* and manly gentleman. Pen, in his character of Admirable Crichton, thought it necessary to be a great judge and practitioner of dinners; we have just said how the college cook respected him, and shall soon have to deplore that that worthy man so blindly trusted our Pen. In the third year of the lad's residence at Oxbridge his staircase was by no means encumbered with dish-covers and desserts and waiters carrying in dishes, and skips opening iced

champagne; crowds of different sorts of attendants, with faces sulky or piteous, hung about the outer oak, and assailed the unfortunate lad as he issued out of his den.

Nor did his guardian's advice take any effect, or induce Mr. Pen to avoid the society of the disreputable Mr. Bloundell.

The young magnates of the neighbouring great College of St. George's, who regarded Pen, and in whose society he lived, were not taken in by Bloundell's flashy graces, and rakish airs of fashion. Broadbent called him Captain Macheath, and said he would live to be hanged. Foker, during his brief stay at the university with Macheath, with characteristic caution, declined to say anything in the Captain's disfavour, but hinted to Pen that he had better have him for a partner at whist than play against him, and better back him at *écarté* than bet on the other side. "You see, he plays better than you do, Pen," was the astute young gentleman's remark: "he plays uncommon well, the Captain does;—and Pen, I wouldn't take the odds too freely from him, if I was you. I don't think he's too flush of money, the Captain ain't." But beyond these dark suggestions and generalities, the cautious Foker could not be got to speak.

Not that his advice would have had more weight with a headstrong young man, than advice commonly has with a lad who is determined on pursuing his own way. Pen's appetite for pleasure was insatiable, and he rushed at it wherever it presented itself, with an eagerness which bespoke his fiery constitution and youthful health. He called taking pleasure "seeing life," and quoted well-known maxims from Terence, from Horace, from Shakspeare, to show that one should do all that might become a man. He bade fair to be utterly used up and a *roué*, in a few years, if he were to continue at the pace at which he was going.

One night after a supper-party in college, at which Pen and Macheath had been present, and at which a little quiet *vingt-et-un* had been played, as the men had taken their caps and were going away, after no great losses or winnings on any side, Mr. Bloundell playfully took up a green wine-glass from the supper-table, which had been destined to contain iced cup, but into which he inserted something still more pernicious, namely a pair of dice, which the gentleman took out of his waistcoat pocket, and put into the glass. Then giving the glass a graceful wave which showed that his hand was quite experienced in the throwing of dice, he called seven's the main, and whisking the ivory cubes gently on the table, swept them up lightly again from the cloth, and repeated this process two or three times.

The other men looked on, Pen, of course, among the number, who had never used the dice as yet, except to play a humdrum game of backgammon at home.

Mr. Bloundell, who had a good voice, began to troll out the chorus from "Robert the Devil," an Opera then in great vogue, in which chorus many of the men joined, especially Pen, who was in very high spirits, having won a good number of shillings and half-crowns at the *vingt-et-un*—and presently, instead of going home, most of the party were seated round the table playing at dice, the green glass going round from hand to hand until Pen finally shivered it, after throwing six mains.

From that night Pen plunged into the delights of the game of hazard, as eagerly as it was his custom to pursue any new pleasure. Dice can be played of mornings as well as after dinner or supper. Bloundell would come into Pen's rooms after breakfast, and it was astonishing how quick the time passed as the bones were rattling. They had little quiet parties with closed doors, and Bloundell devised a box lined with felt, so that the dice should make no noise, and their tell-tale rattle not bring the sharp-eared tutors up to the rooms. Bloundell, Ringwood, and Pen were once very nearly caught by Mr. Buck, who, passing in the Quadrangle, thought he heard the words "Two to one on the caster," through Pen's open window; but when the tutor got into Arthur's rooms he found the lads with three Homers before them, and Pen said, he was trying to coach the two other men, and asked Mr. Buck with great gravity what was the present condition of the River Scamander, and whether it was navigable or no?

Mr. Arthur Pendennis did not win much money in these transactions with Mr. Bloundell, or indeed gain good of any kind except a knowledge of the odds at hazard, which he might have learned out of books.

One Easter vacation, when Pen had announced to his mother and uncle his intention not to go down, but stay at Oxbridge and read, Mr. Pen was nevertheless induced to take a brief visit to London in company with his friend Mr. Bloundell. They put up at a hotel in Covent Garden, where Bloundell had a tick, as he called it, and took the pleasures of the town very freely after the wont of young university men. Bloundell still belonged to a military club, whither he took Pen to dine once or twice (the young men would drive thither in a cab, trembling lest they should meet Major Pendennis on his beat in Pall Mall), and here Pen was introduced to a number of gallant young fellows with spurs and mustachios, with whom he drank pale-ale of

mornings and beat the town of a night. Here he saw a deal of life, indeed: nor in his career about the theatres and singing-houses which these roaring young blades frequented, was he very likely to meet his guardian. One night, nevertheless, they were very near to each other: a plank only separating Pen, who was in the boxes of the Museum Theatre, from the Major, who was in Lord Steyne's box, along with that venerated nobleman. The Fotheringay was in the pride of her glory. She had made a hit: that is, she had drawn very good houses for nearly a year, had starred the provinces with great *éclat*, had come back to shine in London with somewhat diminished lustre, and now was acting with "ever-increasing attraction, &c.," "triumph of the good old British drama," as the play-bills avowed, to houses in which there was plenty of room for anybody who wanted to see her.

It was not the first time Pen had seen her, since that memorable day when the two had parted in Chatteris. In the previous year, when the town was making much of her, and the press lauded her beauty, Pen had found a pretext for coming to London in term-time, and had rushed off to the theatre to see his old flame. He recollected it rather than renewed it. He remembered how ardently he used to be on the look out at Chatteris, when the speech before Ophelia's or Mrs. Haller's entrance on the stage was made by the proper actor. Now, as the actor spoke, he had a sort of feeble thrill: as the house began to thunder with applause, and Ophelia entered with her old bow and sweeping curtsey, Pen felt a slight shock and blushed very much as he looked at her, and could not help thinking that all the house was regarding him. He hardly heard her for the first part of the play: and he thought with such rage of the humiliation to which she had subjected him, that he began to fancy he was jealous and in love with her still. But that illusion did not last very long. He ran round to the stage door of the theatre to see her if possible, but he did not succeed. She passed indeed under his nose with a female companion, but he did not know her,—nor did she recognise him. The next night he came in late, and stayed very quietly for the afterpiece, and on the third and last night of his stay in London—why Taglioni was going to dance at the Opera,—Taglioni! and there was to be "Don Giovanni," which he admired of all things in the world: so Mr. Pen went to "Don Giovanni" and Taglioni.

This time the illusion about her was quite gone. She was not less handsome, but she was not the same, somehow. The light was gone out of her eyes which used to flash there, or Pen's no longer were

dazzled by it. The rich voice spoke as of old, yet it did not make Pen's bosom thrill as formerly. He thought he could recognise the brogue underneath: the accents seemed to him coarse and false. It annoyed him to hear the same emphasis on the same words, only uttered a little louder: worse than this, it annoyed him to think that he should ever have mistaken that loud imitation for genius, or melted at those mechanical sobs and sighs. He felt that it was in another life almost, that it was another man who had so madly loved her. He was ashamed and bitterly humiliated, and very lonely. Ah, poor Pen! the delusion is better than the truth sometimes, and fine dreams than dismal waking.

They went and had an uproarious supper that night, and Mr. Pen had a fine headache the next morning, with which he went back to Oxbridge, having spent all his ready money.

As all this narrative is taken from Pen's own confessions, so that the reader may be assured of the truth of every word of it, and as Pen himself never had any accurate notion of the manner in which he spent his money, and plunged himself in much deeper pecuniary difficulties, during his luckless residence at Oxbridge University, it is, of course, impossible for me to give any accurate account of his involvements, beyond that general notion of his way of life, which we have sketched a few pages back. He does not speak too hardly of the roguery of the university tradesmen, or of those in London whom he honoured with his patronage at the outset of his career. Even Finch, the money-lender, to whom Bloundell introduced him, and with whom he had various transactions, in which the young rascal's signature appeared upon stamped paper, treated him, according to Pen's own account, with forbearance, and never mulcted him of more than a hundred per cent. The old college-cook, his fervent admirer, made him a private bill, offered to send him in dinners up to the very last, and never would have pressed his account to his dying day. There was that kindness and frankness about Arthur Pendennis, which won most people who came in contact with him, and which, if it rendered him an easy prey to rogues, got him, perhaps, more goodwill than he merited from many honest men. It was impossible to resist his good nature, or, in his worst moments, not to hope for his rescue from utter ruin.

At the time of his full career of university pleasure, he would leave the gayest party to go and sit with a sick friend. He never knew the difference between small and great in the treatment of his acquaintances, however much the unlucky lad's tastes, which were of the sumptuous order, led him to prefer good society; he was only too

ready to share his guinea with a poor friend, and when he got money had an irresistible propensity for paying, which he never could conquer through life.

In his third year at college, the duns began to gather awfully round about him, and there was a levee at his oak which scandalised the tutors, and would have scared many a stouter heart. With some of these he used to battle, some he would bully (under Mr. Bloundell's directions, who was a master in this art, though he took a degree in no other), and some deprecate. And it is reported of him that little Mary Frodsham, the daughter of a certain poor gilder and frame-maker, whom Mr. Pen had thought fit to employ, and who had made a number of beautiful frames for his fine prints, coming to Pendennis with a piteous tale that her father was ill with ague, and that there was an execution in their house, Pen in an anguish of remorse rushed away, pawned his grand watch and every singie article of jewellery except two old gold sleeve-buttons, which had belonged to his father, and rushed with the proceeds to Frodsham's shop, where, with tears in his eyes, and the deepest repentance and humility, he asked the poor tradesman's pardon.

This, young gentlemen, is not told as an instance of Pen's virtue, but rather of his weakness. It would have been much more virtuous to have had no prints at all. He still owed for the baubles which he sold in order to pay Frodsham's bill, and his mother had cruelly to pinch herself in order to discharge the jeweller's account, so that she was in the end the sufferer by the lad's impertinent fancies and follies. We are not presenting Pen to you as a hero or a model, only as a lad, who, in the midst of a thousand vanities and weaknesses, has as yet some generous impulses, and is not altogether dishonest.

We have said it was to the scandal of Mr. Buck the tutor that Pen's extravagances became known: from the manner in which he entered college, the associates he kept, and the introductions of Doctor Portman and the Major, Buck for a long time thought that his pupil was a man of large property, and wondered rather that he only wore a plain gown. Once on going up to London to the levee with an address from His Majesty's Loyal University of Oxbridge, Buck had seen Major Pendennis at St. James's in conversation with two knights of the garter, in the carriage of one of whom the dazzled tutor saw the Major whisked away after the levee. He asked Pen to wine the instant he came back, let him off from chapels and lectures more than ever, and felt perfectly sure that he was a young gentleman of *large estate.*

Thus, he was thunderstruck when he heard the truth, and received a dismal confession from Pen. His university debts were large, and the tutor had nothing to do, and of course Pen did not acquaint him, with his London debts. What man ever does tell all when pressed by his friends about his liabilities? The tutor learned enough to know that Pen was poor, that he had spent a handsome, almost a magnificent allowance, and had raised around him such a fine crop of debts, as it would be very hard work for any man to mow down; for there is no plant that grows so rapidly when once it has taken root.

Perhaps it was because she was so tender and good that Pen was terrified lest his mother should know of his sins. "I can't bear to break it to her," he said to the tutor in an agony of grief. "O! sir, I've been a villain to her"—and he repented, and he wished he had the time to come over again, and he asked himself, "Why, why did his uncle insist upon the necessity of living with great people, and in how much did all his grand acquaintance profit him?"

They were not shy, but Pen thought they were, and slunk from them during his last terms at college. He was as gloomy as a death's-head at parties, which he avoided of his own part, or to which his young friends soon ceased to invite him. Everybody knew that Pendennis was "hard up." That man Bloundell, who could pay nobody, and who was obliged to go down after three terms, was his ruin, the men said. His melancholy figure might be seen shirking about the lonely quadrangles in his battered old cap and torn gown, and he who had been the pride of the university but a year before, the man whom all the young ones loved to look at, was now the object of conversation at freshmen's wine parties, and they spoke of him with wonder and awe.

At last came the Degree Examinations. Many a young man of his year whose hob-nailed shoes Pen had derided, and whose face or coat he had caricatured—many a man whom he had treated with scorn in the lecture-room or crushed with his eloquence in the debating-club—many of his own set who had not half his brains, but a little regularity and constancy of occupation, took high places in the honours or passed with decent credit. And where in the list was Pen the superb, Pen the wit and dandy, Pen the poet and orator? Ah, where was Pen the widow's darling and sole pride? Let us hide our heads, and shut up the page. The lists came out; and a dreadful rumour rushed through the university, that Pendennis of Boniface was plucked.

CHAPTER XX.

FLIGHT AFTER DEFEAT.

DURING the latter part of Pen's residence at the University of Oxbridge, his uncle's partiality had greatly increased for the lad. The Major was proud of Arthur, who had high spirits, frank manners, a good person, and high gentlemanlike bearing. It pleased the old London bachelor to see Pen walking with the young patricians of his university, and he (who was never known to entertain his friends, and whose stinginess had passed into a sort of byword among some wags at the Club, who envied his many engagements, and did not choose to consider his poverty) was charmed to give his nephew and the young lords snug little dinners at his lodgings, and to regale them with good claret, and his very best *bons mots* and stories: some of which would be injured by the repetition, for the Major's manner of telling them was incomparably neat and careful; and others, whereof the repetition would do good to nobody. He paid his court to their parents through the young men, and to himself as it were by their company. He made more than one visit to Oxbridge, where the young fellows were amused by entertaining the old gentleman, and gave parties and breakfasts, and fêtes, partly to joke him and partly to do

him honour. He plied them with his stories. He made himself juvenile and hilarious in the company of the young lords. He went to hear Pen at a grand debate at the Union, crowed and cheered, and rapped his stick in chorus with the cheers of the men, and was astounded at the boy's eloquence and fire. He thought he had got a young Pitt for a nephew. He had an almost paternal fondness for Pen. He wrote to the lad letters with playful advice and the news of the town. He bragged about Arthur at his Clubs, and introduced him with pleasure into his conversation; saying, that, Egad, the young fellows were putting the old ones to the wall; that the lads who were coming up, young Lord Plinlimmon, a friend of my boy, young Lord Magnus Charters, a chum of my scapegrace, &c., would make a greater figure in the world than ever their fathers had done before them. He asked permission to bring Arthur to a grand fête at Gaunt House; saw him with ineffable satisfaction dancing with the sisters of the young noblemen before mentioned; and gave himself as much trouble to procure cards of invitation for the lad to some good houses, as if he had been a mamma with a daughter to marry, and not an old half-pay officer in a wig. And he boasted everywhere of the boy's great talents, and remarkable oratorical powers; and of the brilliant degree he was going to take. Lord Runnymede would take him on his embassy, or the Duke would bring him in for one of his boroughs, he wrote over and over again to Helen; who, for her part, was too ready to believe anything that anybody chose to say in favour of her son.

And all this pride and affection of uncle and mother had been trampled down by Pen's wicked extravagance and idleness! I don't envy Pen's feelings (as the phrase is), as he thought of what he had done. He had slept, and the tortoise had won the race. He had marred at its outset what might have been a brilliant career. He had dipped ungenerously into a generous mother's purse; basely and recklessly spilt her little cruse. O! it was a coward hand that could strike and rob a creature so tender. And if Pen felt the wrong which he had done to others, are we to suppose that a young gentleman of his vanity did not feel still more keenly the shame he had brought upon himself? Let us be assured that there is no more cruel remorse than that; and no groans more piteous than those of wounded self-love. Like Joe Miller's friend, the Senior Wrangler, who bowed to the audience from his box at the play, because he and the king happened to enter the theatre at the same time, only with a fatuity by no means so agreeable to himself, poor Arthur Pendennis

felt perfectly convinced that all England would remark the absence of his name from the examination-lists, and talk about his misfortune. His wounded tutor, his many duns, the skip and bed-maker who waited upon him, the undergraduates of his own time and the years below him, whom he had patronised or scorned—how could he bear to look any of them in the face now? He rushed to his rooms, into which he shut himself, and there he penned a letter to his tutor, full of thanks, regards, remorse, and despair, requesting that his name might be taken off the college books, and intimating a wish and expectation that death would speedily end the woes of the disgraced Arthur Pendennis.

Then he slunk out, scarcely knowing whither he went, but mechanically taking the unfrequented little lanes by the backs of the colleges, until he cleared the university precincts, and got down to the banks of the Camisis river, now deserted, but so often alive with the boat-races, and the crowds of cheering gownsmen; he wandered on and on, until he found himself at some miles' distance from Oxbridge, or rather was found by some acquaintance, leaving that city.

As Pen went up a hill, a drizzling January rain beating in his face, and his ragged gown flying behind him—for he had not divested himself of his academical garments since the morning—a postchaise came rattling up the road, on the box of which a servant was seated, whilst within, or rather half out of the carriage window, sate a young gentleman smoking a cigar, and loudly encouraging the postboy. It was our young acquaintance of Baymouth, Mr. Spavin, who had got his degree, and was driving homewards in triumph in his yellow postchaise. He caught a sight of the figure, madly gesticulating as he worked up the hill, and of poor Pen's pale and ghastly face as the chaise whirled by him.

"Wo!" roared Mr. Spavin to the postboy, and the horses stopped in their mad career, and the carriage pulled up some fifty yards before Pen. He presently heard his own name shouted, and beheld the upper half of the body of Mr. Spavin thrust out of the side-window of the vehicle, and beckoning Pen vehemently towards it.

Pen stopped, hesitated—nodded his head fiercely, and pointed onwards, as if desirous that the postilion should proceed. He did not speak: but his countenance must have looked very desperate, for young Spavin, having stared at him with an expression of blank alarm, jumped out of the carriage presently, ran towards Pen holding

out his hand, and grasping Pen's said, "I say—hullo, old boy, where are you going, and what's the row now?"

"I'm going where I deserve to go," said Pen, with an imprecation.

"This ain't the way," said Mr. Spavin, smiling. "This is the Fenbury road. I say, Pen, don't take on because you are plucked. It's nothing when you are used to it. I've been plucked three times, old boy—and after the first time I didn't care. Glad it's over, though. You'll have better luck next time."

Pen looked at his early acquaintance,—who had been plucked, who had been rusticated, who had only, after repeated failures, learned to read and write correctly, and who, in spite of all these drawbacks, had attained the honour of a degree. "This man has passed," he thought, "and I have failed!" It was almost too much for him to bear.

"Good-bye, Spavin," said he; "I'm very glad you are through. Don't let me keep you; I'm in a hurry—I'm going to town to-night."

"Gammon," said Mr. Spavin. "This ain't the way to town; this is the Fenbury road, I tell you."

"I was just going to turn back," Pen said.

"All the coaches are full with the men going down," Spavin said. Pen winced. "You'd not get a place for a ten-pound note. Get into my yellow; I'll drop you at Mudford, where you have a chance of the Fenbury mail. I'll lend you a hat and coat; I've got lots. Come along; jump in, old boy—go it, leathers!"—and in this way Pen found himself in Mr. Spavin's postchaise, and rode with that gentleman as far as the Ram Inn at Mudford, fifteen miles from Oxbridge; where the Fenbury mail changed horses, and where Pen got a place on to London.

The next day there was an immense excitement in Boniface College, Oxbridge, where, for some time, a rumour prevailed, to the terror of Pen's tutor and tradesmen, that Pendennis, maddened at losing his degree, had made away with himself—a battered cap, in which his name was almost discernible, together with a seal bearing his crest of an eagle looking at a now extinct sun, had been found three miles on the Fenbury road, near a mill stream; and for four-and-twenty hours, it was supposed that poor Pen had flung himself into the stream, until letters arrived from him, bearing the London post-mark.

The mail reached London at the dreary hour of five; and he hastened to the inn at Covent Garden, at which he was accustomed to put up, where the ever-wakeful porter admitted him, and showed him

to a bed. Pen looked hard at the man, and wondered whether Boots knew he was plucked? When in bed he could not sleep there. He tossed about until the appearance of the dismal London daylight, when he sprang up desperately, and walked off to his uncle's lodgings in

Bury Street; where the maid, who was scouring the steps, looked up suspiciously at him, as he came with an unshaven face, and yesterday's linen. He thought she knew of his mishap, too.

"Good evens! Mr. Harthur, what *as* appened, sir?" Mr. Morgan, the valet, asked, who had just arranged the well-brushed clothes and

shiny boots at the door of his master's bed-room, and was carrying in his wig to the Major.

"I want to see my uncle," he cried, in a ghastly voice, and flung himself down on a chair.

Morgan backed before the pale and desperate-looking young man, with terrified and wondering glances, and disappeared into his master's apartment.

The Major put his head out of the bed-room door, as soon as he had his wig on.

"What? examination over? Senior Wrangler, double First Class, hay?" said the old gentleman—"I'll come directly;" and the head disappeared.

"They don't know what has happened," groaned Pen; "what will they say when they know all?"

Pen had been standing with his back to the window, and to such a dubious light as Bury Street enjoys of a foggy January morning, so that his uncle could not see the expression of the young man's countenance, or the looks of gloom and despair which even Mr. Morgan had remarked.

But when the Major came out of his dressing-room neat and radiant, and preceded by faint odours from Delcroix's shop, from which emporium Major Pendennis's wig and his pocket-handkerchief got their perfume, he held out one of his hands to Pen, and was about addressing him in his cheery high-toned voice, when he caught sight of the boy's face at length, and dropping his hand, said, "Good God! Pen, what's the matter?"

"You'll see it in the papers at breakfast, sir," Pen said.

"See what!"

"My name isn't there, sir."

Hang it, why *should* it be?" asked the Major, more perplexed.

"I have lost everything, sir," Pen groaned out; "my honour's gone; I'm ruined irretrievably; I can't go back to Oxbridge."

"Lost your honour?" screamed out the Major. "Heaven alive! you don't mean to say you have shown the white feather?"

Pen laughed bitterly at the word feather, and repeated it. "No, it isn't that, sir. I'm not afraid of being shot; I wish to God anybody would shoot me. I have not got my degree. I—I'm plucked, sir."

The Major had heard of plucking, but in a very vague and cursory way, and concluded that it was some ceremony performed corporally upon rebellious university youth. "I wonder you can look me in the

face after such a disgrace, sir," he said; "I wonder you submitted to it as a gentleman."

"I couldn't help it, sir. I did my classical papers well enough: it was those infernal mathematics, which I have always neglected."

"Was it—was it done in public, sir?" the Major said.

"What?"

"The—the plucking?" asked the guardian, looking Pen anxiously in the face.

Pen perceived the error under which his guardian was labouring, and in the midst of his misery the blunder caused the poor wretch a faint smile, and served to bring down the conversation from the tragedy-key, in which Pen had been disposed to carry it on. He explained to his uncle that he had gone in to pass his examination, and failed. On which the Major said, that though he had expected far better things of his nephew, there was no great misfortune in this, and no dishonour as far as he saw, and that Pen must try again.

"*Me* again at Oxbridge," Pen thought, "after such a humiliation as that!" He felt that, except he went down to burn the place, he could not enter it.

But it was when he came to tell his uncle of his debts that the other felt surprise and anger most keenly, and broke out into speeches most severe upon Pen, which the lad bore, as best he might, without flinching. He had determined to make a clean breast, and had formed a full, true and complete list of all his bills and liabilities at the university, and in London. They consisted of various items, such as

London Tailor.	Oxbridge do.
Oxbridge do.	Bill for horses.
Haberdasher, for shirts and gloves.	Printseller.
Jeweller.	Books.
College Cook.	Binding.
Crump, for desserts.	Hairdresser and Perfumery.
Bootmaker.	Hotel Bill in London.
Wine Merchant in London.	Sundries.

All which items the reader may fill in at his pleasure—such accounts have been inspected by the parents of many university youth,—and it appeared that Mr. Pen's bills in all amounted to about seven hundred pounds; and, furthermore, it was calculated that he had had more than twice that sum of ready money during his stay at Oxbridge. This sum he had spent, and for it had to show—what?

"You need not press a man who is down, sir," Pen said to his uncle, gloomily. "I know very well, how wicked and idle I have been. My mother won't like to see me dishonoured, sir," he continued, with his voice failing; "and I know she will pay these accounts. But I shall ask her for no more money."

"As you like, sir," the Major said. "You are of age, and my hands are washed of your affairs. But you can't live without money, and have no means of making it that I see, though you have a fine talent in spending it, and it is my belief that you will proceed as you have begun, and ruin your mother before you are five years older.—Good morning; it is time for me to go to breakfast. My engagements won't permit me to see you much during the time that you stay in London. I presume that you will acquaint your mother with the news which you have just conveyed to me."

And pulling on his hat, and trembling in his limbs somewhat, Major Pendennis walked out of his lodgings before his nephew, and went ruefully off to take his accustomed corner at the Club. He saw the Oxbridge examination-lists in the morning papers, and read over the names, not understanding the business, with mournful accuracy. He consulted various old fogies of his acquaintance, in the course of the day, at his Clubs; Wenham, a Dean, various Civilians; and, as it is called, "took their opinion," showing to some of them the amount of his nephew's debts, which he had dotted down on the back of a card, and asking what was to be done, and whether such debts were not monstrous, preposterous? What was to be done?—There was nothing for it but to pay. Wenham and the others told the Major of young men who owed twice as much—five times as much—as Arthur, and with no means at all to pay. The consultations, and calculations, and opinions, comforted the Major somewhat. After all, *he* was not to pay.

But he thought bitterly of the many plans he had formed to make a man of his nephew, of the sacrifices which he had made, and of the manner in which he was disappointed. And he wrote off a letter to Doctor Portman, informing him of the direful events which had taken place, and begging the Doctor to break them to Helen. For the orthodox old gentleman preserved the regular routine in all things, and was of opinion that it was more correct to "break" a piece of bad news to a person by means of a (possibly *maladroit* and unfeeling) messenger, than to convey it simply to its destination by a note. So the Major wrote to Doctor Portman, and then went out to dinner, one of the saddest men in any London dining-room that day.

Pen, too, wrote his letter, and skulked about London streets for the rest of the day, fancying that everybody was looking at him and whispering to his neighbour, "That is Pendennis of Boniface, who was plucked yesterday." His letter to his mother was full of tenderness and remorse: he wept the bitterest tears over it—and the repentance and passion soothed him to some degree.

He saw a party of roaring young blades from Oxbridge in the coffee-room of his hotel, and slunk away from them, and paced the streets. He remembers, he says, the prints which he saw hanging up at Ackermann's window in the rain, and a book which he read at a stall near the Temple: at night he went to the pit of the play, and saw Miss Fotheringay, but he doesn't in the least recollect in what piece.

On the second day there came a kind letter from his tutor, containing many grave and appropriate remarks upon the event which had befallen him, but strongly urging Pen not to take his name off the university books, and to retrieve a disaster which, everybody knew, was owing to his own carelessness alone, and which he might repair by a month's application. He said he had ordered Pen's skip to pack up some trunks of the young gentleman's wardrobe, which duly arrived with fresh copies of all Pen's bills laid on the top.

On the third day there arrived a letter from Home! which Pen read in his bedroom, and the result of which was that he fell down on his knees, with his head in the bed-clothes, and there prayed out his heart, and humbled himself: and having gone downstairs and eaten an immense breakfast, he sallied forth and took his place at the Bull and Mouth, Piccadilly, by the Chatteris coach for that evening.

CHAPTER XXI.

PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

UCH a letter as the Major wrote, of course sent Doctor Portman to Fairoaks, and he went off with that alacrity which a good man shows when he has disagreeable news to communicate. He wishes the deed were done, and done quickly. He is sorry, but *que voulez-vous?* the tooth must be taken out, and he has you into the chair, and it is surprising with what courage and vigour of wrist he applies the forceps. Perhaps he would not be quite so active or eager if it were *his* tooth; but, in fine, it is your duty to have it out. So the Doctor, having read the epistle out to Mira and Mrs. Portman, with many damnatory comments upon the young scapegrace who was going deeper and deeper into perdition, left those ladies to spread the news through the Clavering society, which they did with their accustomed accuracy and despatch, and strode over to Fairoaks to break the intelligence to the widow.

She had the news already. She had read Pen's letter, and it had relieved her somehow. A gloomy presentiment of evil had been hanging over her for many, many months past. She knew the worst now, and her darling boy was come back to her repentant and tender-hearted. Did she want more? All that the Rector could say (and his remarks were both dictated by common sense, and made respect-

able by antiquity) could not bring Helen to feel any indignation or particular unhappiness, except that the boy should be unhappy. What was this degree that they made such an outcry about, and what good would it do Pen? Why did Doctor Portman and his uncle insist upon sending the boy to a place where there was so much temptation to be risked, and so little good to be won? Why didn't they leave him at home with his mother? As for his debts, of course they must be paid;—his debts!—wasn't his father's money all his, and hadn't he a right to spend it? In this way the widow met the virtuous Doctor, and all the arrows of his indignation somehow took no effect upon her gentle bosom.

For some time past, an agreeable practice, known since times ever so ancient, by which brothers and sisters are wont to exhibit their affection towards one another, and in which Pen and his little sister Laura had been accustomed to indulge pretty frequently in their childish days, had been given up by the mutual consent of those two individuals. Coming back from college after an absence from home of some months, in place of the simple girl whom he had left behind him, Mr. Arthur found a tall, slim, handsome young lady, to whom he could not somehow proffer the kiss which he had been in the habit of administering previously, and who received him with a gracious curtsey and a proffered hand, and with a great blush which rose up to the cheek, just upon the very spot which young Pen had been used to salute.

I am not good at descriptions of female beauty; and, indeed, do not care for it in the least (thinking that goodness and virtue are, of course, far more advantageous to a young lady than any mere fleeting charms of person and face), and so shall not attempt any particular delineation of Miss Laura Bell at the age of sixteen years. At that age she had attained her present altitude of five feet four inches, so that she was called tall and gawky by some, and a Maypole by others, of her own sex, who prefer littler women. But if she was a Maypole, she had beautiful roses about her head, and it is a fact that many swains were disposed to dance round her. She was ordinarily pale, with a faint rose tinge in her cheeks; but they flushed up in a minute when occasion called, and continued so blushing ever so long, the roses remaining after the emotion had passed away which had summoned those pretty flowers into existence. Her eyes have been described as very large from her earliest childhood, and retained that characteristic in later life. Good-natured critics (always females) said that she was in the habit of making play with those eyes, and ogling

the gentlemen and ladies in her company ; but the fact is, that Nature had made them so to shine and to look, and they could no more help so looking and shining than one star can help being brighter than another. It was doubtless to mitigate their brightness that Miss Laura's eyes were provided with two pairs of veils in the shape of the longest and finest black eyelashes, so that, when she closed her eyes, the same people who found fault with those orbs, said that she wanted to show her eyelashes off ; and, indeed, I dare say that to see her asleep would have been a pretty sight.

As for her complexion, that was nearly as brilliant as Lady Mantrap's, and without the powder which her ladyship uses. Her nose must be left to the reader's imagination : if her mouth was rather large (as Miss Piminy avers, who, but for her known appetite, one would think could not swallow anything larger than a button) everybody allowed that her smile was charming, and showed off a set of pearly teeth, whilst her voice was so low and sweet, that to hear it was like listening to sweet music. Because she is in the habit of wearing very long dresses, people of course say that her feet are not small : but it may be, that they are of the size becoming her figure, and it does not follow, because Mrs. Pincher is always putting *her* foot out, that all other ladies should be perpetually bringing theirs on the tapis. In fine, Miss Laura Bell, at the age of sixteen, was a sweet young lady. Many thousands of such are to be found, let us hope, in this country, where there is no lack of goodness, and modesty, and purity, and beauty.

Now, Miss Laura, since she had learned to think for herself (and in the past two years her mind and her person had both developed themselves considerably), had only been half pleased with Pen's general conduct and bearing. His letters to his mother at home had become of late very rare and short. It was in vain that the fond widow urged how constant Arthur's occupations and studies were, and how many his engagements. " It is better that he should lose a prize," Laura said, " than forget his mother : and indeed, mamma, I don't see that he gets many prizes. Why doesn't he come home and stay with you, instead of passing his vacations at his great friends' fine houses ? There is nobody there will love him half as much as—as you do." " As *I* do only, Laura," sighed out Mrs. Pendennis. Laura declared stoutly that she did not love Pen a bit, when he did not do his duty to his mother : nor would she be convinced by any of Helen's fond arguments, that the boy must make his way in the world ; that his uncle was most desirous that Pen should cultivate the acquaintance of

persons who were likely to befriend him in life; that men had a thousand ties and calls which women could not understand, and so forth. Perhaps Helen no more believed in these excuses than her adopted daughter did; but she tried to believe that she believed them, and comforted herself with the maternal infatuation. And that is a point whereon I suppose many a gentleman has reflected, that, do what we will, we are pretty sure of the woman's love that once has been ours; and that that untiring tenderness and forgiveness never fail us.

Also, there had been that freedom, not to say audacity, in Arthur's latter talk and ways, which had shocked and displeased Laura. Not that he ever offended her by rudeness, or addressed to her a word which she ought not to hear, for Mr. Pen was a gentleman, and by nature and education polite to every woman high and low; but he spoke lightly and laxly of women in general; was less courteous in his actions than in his words—neglectful in sundry ways, and in many of the little offices of life. It offended Miss Laura that he should smoke his horrid pipes in the house; that he should refuse to go to church with his mother, or on walks or visits with her, and be found yawning over his novel in his dressing-gown, when the gentle widow returned from those duties. The hero of Laura's early infancy, about whom she had passed so many, many nights talking with Helen (who recited endless stories of the boy's virtues, and love, and bravery, when he was away at school), was a very different person from the young man whom now she knew; bold and brilliant, sarcastic and defiant, seeming to scorn the simple occupations or pleasures, or even devotions, of the women with whom he lived, and whom he quitted on such light pretexts.

The Fotheringay affair, too, when Laura came to hear of it (which she did first by some sarcastic allusions of Major Pendennis, when on a visit to Fairoaks, and then from their neighbours at Clavering, who had plenty of information to give her on this head), vastly shocked and outraged Miss Laura. A Pendennis fling himself away on such a woman as that! Helen's boy galloping away from home day after day, to fall on his knees to an actress, and drink with her horrid father! A good son want to bring such a man and such a woman into his house, and set her over his mother! "I would have run away, mamma; I would, if I had had to walk barefoot through the snow," Laura said.

"And *you* would have left me too, then?" Helen answered; on which, of course, Laura withdrew her previous observation, and

the two women rushed into each other's embraces with that warmth which belonged to both their natures, and which characterises not a few of their sex. Whence comes all this indignation of Miss Laura about Arthur's passion? Perhaps she did not know, that, if men throw themselves away upon women, women throw themselves away upon men, too; and that there is no more accounting for love, than for any other physical liking or antipathy: perhaps she had been misinformed by the Clavering people and old Mrs. Portman, who was vastly bitter against Pen, especially since his impertinent behaviour to the Doctor, and since the wretch had smoked cigars in church-time: perhaps, finally, she was jealous; but this is a vice in which it is said the ladies very seldom indulge.

Albeit she was angry with Pen, against his mother she had no such feeling; but devoted herself to Helen with the utmost force of her girlish affection—such affection as women, whose hearts are disengaged, are apt to bestow upon a near female friend. It was devotion—it was passion—it was all sorts of fondness and folly; it was a profusion of caresses, tender epithets and endearments, such as it does not become sober historians with beards to narrate. Do not let us men despise these instincts because we cannot feel them. These women were made for our comfort and delectation, gentlemen, —with all the rest of the minor animals.

But as soon as Miss Laura heard that Pen was unfortunate and unhappy, all her wrath against him straightway vanished, and gave place to the most tender and unreasonable compassion. He was the Pen of old days once more restored to her, the frank and affectionate, the generous and tender-hearted. She at once took side with Helen against Doctor Portman, when he outcried at the enormity of Pen's trangressions. Debts? what were his debts? they were a trifle; he had been thrown into expensive society by his uncle's order, and of course was obliged to live in the same manner as the young gentlemen whose company he frequented. Disgraced by not getting his degree; the poor boy was ill when he went in for the examinations: he couldn't think of his mathematics and stuff on account of those very debts which oppressed him; very likely some of the odious tutors and masters were jealous of him, and had favourites of their own whom they wanted to put over his head. *Other* people disliked him and were cruel to him, and were unfair to him, she was very sure. And so, with flushing cheeks and eyes bright with anger, this young creature reasoned; and she went up and seized Helen's hand, and kissed her in the Doctor's presence, and her looks

braved the Doctor, and seemed to ask how he dared to say a word against her darling mother's Pen?

When that divine took his leave, not a little discomfited and amazed at the pertinacious obstinacy of the women, Laura repeated her embraces and arguments with tenfold fervour to Helen, who felt that there was a great deal of cogency in most of the latter. There must be some jealousy against Pen. She felt quite sure that he had offended some of the examiners, who had taken a mean revenge of him—nothing more likely. Altogether, the announcement of the misfortune vexed these two ladies very little indeed. Pen, who was plunged in his shame and grief in London, and torn with great remorse for thinking of his mother's sorrow, would have wondered had he seen how easily she bore the calamity. Indeed, calamity is welcome to women if they think it will bring truant affection home again: and if you have reduced your mistress to a crust, depend upon it that she won't repine, and only take a very little bit of it for herself, provided you will eat the remainder in her company.

And directly the Doctor was gone, Laura ordered fires to be lighted in Mr. Arthur's rooms, and his bedding to be aired; and had these preparations completed by the time Helen had finished a most tender and affectionate letter to Pen: when the girl, smiling fondly, took her mamma by the hand, and led her into those apartments where the fires were blazing so cheerfully, and there the two kind creatures sate down on the bed, and talked about Pen ever so long. Laura added a postscript to Helen's letter, in which she called him her dearest Pen, and bade him come home *instantly*, with two of the handsomest dashes under the word, and be happy with his mother and his affectionate sister Laura.

In the middle of the night—as these two ladies, after reading their bibles a great deal during the evening, and after taking just a look into Pen's room as they passed to their own—in the middle of the night, I say, Laura, whose head not unfrequently chose to occupy that pillow which the nightcap of the late Pendennis had been accustomed to press, cried out suddenly, "Mamma, are you awake?"

Helen stirred and said, "Yes, I'm awake." The truth is, though she had been lying quite still and silent, she had not been asleep one instant, but had been looking at the night-lamp in the chimney, and had been thinking of Pen for hours and hours.

Then Miss Laura, (who had been acting with similar hypocrisy, and lying, occupied with her own thoughts, as motionless as Helen's

brooch, with Pen's and Laura's hair in it, on the frilled white pincushion on the dressing-table) began to tell Mrs. Pendennis of a notable plan which she had been forming in her busy little brains; and by which all Pen's embarrassments would be made to vanish in a moment, and without the least trouble to anybody.

"You know, mamma," this young lady said, "that I have been living with you for ten years, during which time you have never taken any of my money, and have been treating me just as if I was a charity girl. Now, this obligation has offended me very much, because I am proud and do not like to be beholden to people. And as, if I had gone to school—only I wouldn't—it must have cost me at least fifty pounds a year, it is clear that I owe you fifty times ten pounds, which I know you have put into the bank at Chatteris for me, and which doesn't belong to me a bit. Now, to-morrow we will go to Chatteris, and see that nice old Mr. Rowdy, with the bald head, and ask him for it,—not for his head, but for the five hundred pounds: and I dare say he will lend you two more, which we will save and pay back; and we will send the money to Pen, who can pay all his debts without hurting anybody, and then we will live happy ever after."

What Helen replied to this speech need not be repeated, as the widow's answer was made up of a great number of incoherent ejaculations, embraces, and other irrelative matter. But the two women slept well after that talk; and when the night-lamp went out with a splutter, and the sun rose gloriously over the purple hills, and the birds began to sing and pipe cheerfully amid the leafless trees and glistening evergreens on Fairoaks lawn, Helen woke too, and as she looked at the sweet face of the girl sleeping beside her, her lips parted with a smile, blushes on her cheeks, her spotless bosom heaving and falling with gentle undulations, as if happy dreams were sweeping over it—Pen's mother felt happy and grateful beyond all power of words, save such as pious women offer up to the Beneficent Dispenser of love and mercy—in Whose honour a chorus of such praises is constantly rising up all round the world.

Although it was January and rather cold weather, so sincere was Mr. Pen's remorse, and so determined his plans of economy, that he would not take an inside place in the coach, but sate up behind with his friend the guard, who remembered his former liberality, and lent him plenty of great-coats. Perhaps it was the cold that made his knees tremble as he got down at the lodge gate, or it may be that he was agitated at the notion of seeing the kind creature for whose love

he had made so selfish a return. Old John was in waiting to receive his master's baggage, but he appeared in a fustian jacket, and no longer wore his livery of drab and blue. "I'se garner and stable man, and lives in the ladge now," this worthy man remarked, with a grin of welcome to Pen, and something of a blush; but instantly as Pen turned the corner of the shrubbery and was out of eye-shot of the coach, Helen made her appearance, her face beaming with love and forgiveness—for forgiving is what some women love best of all.

We may be sure that the widow, having a certain other object in view, had lost no time in writing off to Pen an account of the noble, the magnanimous, the magnificent offer of Laura, filling up her letter with a profusion of benedictions upon both her children. It was probably the knowledge of this money-obligation which caused Pen to blush very much when he saw Laura, who was in waiting in the hall, and who this time, and for this time only, broke through the little arrangement of which we have spoken, as having subsisted between her and Arthur for the last few years; but the truth is, there has been a great deal too much said about kissing in the present chapter.

So the Prodigal came home, and the fatted calf was killed for him, and he was made as happy as two simple women could make him. No allusions were made to the Oxbridge mishap, or questions asked as to his further proceedings, for some time. But Pen debated these anxiously in his own mind, and up in his own room, where he passed much time in cogitation.

A few days after he came home, he rode to Chatteris on his horse, and came back on the top of the coach. He then informed his mother that he had left the horse to be sold; and when that operation was effected, he handed her over the cheque, which she, and possibly Pen himself, thought was an act of uncommon virtue and self-denial, but which Laura pronounced to be only strict justice.

He rarely mentioned the loan which she had made, and which, indeed, had been accepted by the widow with certain modifications; but once or twice, and with great hesitation and stammering, he alluded to it, and thanked her. It evidently pained his vanity to be beholden to the orphan for succour. He was wild to find some means of repaying her.

He left off drinking wine, and betook himself, but with great moderation, to the refreshment of whisky-and-water. He gave up cigar smoking; but it must be confessed that of late years he had liked

pipes and tobacco as well or even better, so that this sacrifice was not a very severe one.

He fell asleep a great deal after dinner when he joined the ladies in the drawing-room, and was certainly very moody and melancholy. He watched the coaches with great interest, walked in to read the papers at Clavering assiduously, dined with anybody who would ask him (and the widow was glad that he should have any entertainment in their solitary place), and played a good deal at cribbage with Captain Glanders.

He avoided Doctor Portman, who, in his turn, whenever Pen passed, gave him very severe looks from under his shovel-hat. He went to church with his mother, however, very regularly, and read prayers for her at home to the little household. Always humble, it was greatly diminished now; a couple of maids did the work of the house of Fairoaks: the silver dish-covers never saw the light at all. John put on his livery to go to church, and assert his dignity on Sundays, but it was only for form's sake. He was gardener and out-door man, vice Upton, resigned. There was but little fire in Fairoaks kitchen, and John and the maids drank their evening beer there by the light of a single candle. All this was Mr. Pen's doing, and the state of things did not increase his cheerfulness.

For some time Pen said no power on earth could induce him to go back to Oxbridge again, after his failure there; but one day, Laura said to him, with many blushes, that she thought, as some sort of reparation, of punishment on himself for his—for his idleness, he ought to go back and get his degree, if he could fetch it by doing so; and so back Mr. Pen went.

A plucked man is a dismal being in a university; belonging to no set of men there, and owned by no one. Pen felt himself plucked indeed of all the fine feathers which he had won during his brilliant years, and rarely appeared out of his college; regularly going to morning chapel, and shutting himself up in his rooms of nights, away from the noise and suppers of the undergraduates. There were no duns about his door, they were all paid—scarcely any cards were left there. The men of his year had taken their degrees, and were gone. He went into a second examination, and passed with perfect ease. He was somewhat more easy in his mind when he appeared in his bachelor's gown.

On his way back from Oxbridge he paid a visit to his uncle in London; but the old gentleman received him with very cold looks,

and would scarcely give him his forefinger to shake. He called a second time, but Morgan, the valet, said his master was from home.

Pen came back to Fairoaks, and to his books and to his idleness, and loneliness and despair. He commenced several tragedies, and wrote many copies of verses of a gloomy cast. He formed plans of reading and broke them. He thought about enlisting—about the Spanish legion—about a profession. He chafed against his captivity, and cursed the idleness which had caused it. Helen said he was breaking his heart, and was sad to see his prostration. As soon as they could afford it, he should go abroad—he should go to London—he should be freed from the dull society of two poor women. It *was* dull—very, certainly. The tender widow's habitual melancholy seemed to deepen into a sadder gloom; and Laura saw with alarm that the dear friend became every year more languid and weary, and that her pale cheek grew more wan.

CHAPTER XXII.

NEW FACES.

THE inmates of Fairoaks were drowsily pursuing this humdrum existence, while the great house upon the hill, on the other side of the River Brawl, was shaking off the slumber in which it had lain during the lives of two generations of masters, and giving extraordinary signs of renewed liveliness.

Just about the time of Pen's little mishap, and when he was so absorbed in the grief occasioned by that calamity as to take no notice of events which befel persons less interesting to himself than Arthur Pendennis, an announcement appeared in the provincial journals which caused no small sensation in the county at least, and in all the towns, villages, halls and mansions, and parsonages for many miles round Clavering Park. At Clavering Market; at Cackleby Fair; at Chatteris Sessions; on Gooseberry Green, as the squire's carriage met the vicar's one-horse contrivance, and the inmates of both vehicles stopped on the road to talk; at Tinkleton Church gate, as the bell was tolling in the sunshine, and the white smocks and scarlet cloaks came trooping over the green common, to Sunday worship; in a hundred societies round about—the word was, that Clavering Park was to be inhabited again.

Some five years before, the county papers had advertised the marriage at Florence, at the British Legation, of Francis Clavering

Esq., only son of Sir Francis Clavering, Bart., of Clavering Park, with Jemima Augusta, daughter of Samuel Snell, of Calcutta, Esq., and widow of the late J. Amory, Esq. At that time the legend in the county was that Clavering, who had been ruined for many a year, had married a widow from India with some money. Some of the county folks caught a sight of the newly-married pair. The Kickleburys, travelling in Italy, had seen them. Clavering occupied the Poggi Palace at Florence, gave parties, and lived comfortably—but could never come to England. Another year—young Peregrine, of Cackleby, making a Long Vacation tour, had fallen in with the Claverings occupying Schloss Schinkenstein, on the Mummul See. At Rome, at Lucca, at Nice, at the baths and gambling places of the Rhine and Belgium, this worthy couple might occasionally be heard of by the curious, and rumours of them came, as it were by gusts, to Clavering's ancestral place.

Their last place of abode was Paris, where they appear to have lived in great fashion and splendour after the news of the death of Samuel Snell, Esq., of Calcutta, reached his orphan daughter in Europe.

Of Sir Francis Clavering's antecedents little can be said that would be advantageous to that respected baronet. The son of an outlaw, living in a dismal old château near Bruges, this gentleman had made a feeble attempt to start in life with a commission in a dragoon regiment, and had broken down almost at the outset. Transactions at the gambling-table had speedily effected his ruin; after a couple of years in the army he had been forced to sell out, had passed some time in Her Majesty's prison of the Fleet, and had then shipped over to Ostend to join the gouty exile, his father. And in Belgium, France, and Germany, for some years, this decayed and abortive prodigal might be seen lurking about billiard-rooms and watering-places, punting at gambling-houses, dancing at boarding-house balls, and riding steeple-chases on other folks' horses.

It was at a boarding-house at Lausanne, that Francis Clavering made what he called the lucky *coup* of marrying the widow Amory, very lately returned from Calcutta. His father died soon after, by consequence of whose demise his wife became Lady Clavering. The title so delighted Mr. Snell of Calcutta, that he doubled his daughter's allowance; and, dying himself soon after, left a fortune to her and her children, the amount of which was, if not magnified by rumour, something very splendid indeed.

Before this time there had been, not rumours unfavourable to Lady

Clavering's reputation, but unpleasant impressions regarding her ladyship. The best English people abroad were shy of making her acquaintance; her manners were not the most refined; her origin was lamentably low and doubtful. The retired East Indians, who are to be found in considerable force in most of the continental towns frequented by English, spoke with much scorn of the disreputable old lawyer and indigo-smuggler her father, and of Amory, her first husband, who had been mate of the Indiaman in which Miss Snell came out to join her father at Calcutta. Neither father nor daughter was in society at Calcutta, or had ever been heard of at Government House. Old Sir Jasper Rogers, who had been Chief Justice of Calcutta, had once said to his wife, that he could tell a queer story about Lady Clavering's first husband; but, greatly to Lady Rogers's disappointment, and that of the young ladies his daughters, the old Judge could never be got to reveal that mystery.

They were all, however, glad enough to go to Lady Clavering's parties, when her ladyship took the Hotel Bouilli in the Rue Grenelle at Paris, and blazed out in the polite world there in the winter of 183—. The Faubourg St. Germain took her up. Viscount Bagwig, our excellent ambassador, paid her marked attention. The princes of the family frequented her salons. The most rigid and noted of the English ladies resident in the French capital acknowledged and countenanced her; the virtuous Lady Elderbury, the severe Lady Rockminster, the venerable Countess of Southdown—people, in a word, renowned for austerity, and of quite a dazzling moral purity:—so great and beneficent an influence had the possession of ten (some said twenty) thousand a-year exercised upon Lady Clavering's character and reputation. And her munificence and good-will were unbounded. Anybody (in society) who had a scheme of charity was sure to find her purse open. The French ladies of piety got money from her to support their schools and convents; she subscribed indifferently for the Armenian patriarch; for Father Barbarossa, who came to Europe to collect funds for his monastery on Mount Athos; for the Baptist Mission to Quashyboo, and the Orthodox Settlement in Feefawfoo, the largest and most savage of the Cannibal Islands. And it is on record of her, that, on the same day on which Madame de Cricri got five napoleons from her in support of the poor persecuted Jesuits, who were at that time in very bad odour in France Lady Budelight put her down in her subscription-list for the Rev. J. Ramshorn who had had a vision which ordered him to convert the Pope of Rome. And more than this, and for the benefit of the

worldly, her ladyship gave the best dinners, and the grandest balls and suppers, which were known at Paris during that season.

And it was during this time, that the good-natured lady must have arranged matters with her husband's creditors in England, for Sir Francis reappeared in his native country, without fear of arrest; was announced in the Morning Post and the county paper, as having taken up his residence at Mivart's Hotel: and one day the anxious old housekeeper at Clavering House beheld a carriage and four horses drive up the long avenue and stop before the moss-grown steps in front of the vast melancholy portico.

Three gentlemen were in the carriage—an open one. On the back seat was our old acquaintance, Mr. Tatham of Chatteris, whilst in the places of honour sat a handsome and portly gentleman enveloped in mustachios, whiskers, fur-collars, and braiding, and by him a pale languid man, who descended feebly from the carriage, when the little lawyer, and the gentleman in fur, had nimbly jumped out of it.

They walked up the great moss-grown steps to the hall-door, and a foreign attendant, with ear-rings and a gold-laced cap, pulled strenuously at the great bell-handle at the cracked and sculptured gate. The bell was heard clanging loudly through the vast gloomy mansion. Steps resounded presently upon the marble pavement of the hall within; and the doors opened, and finally, Mrs. Blenkinsop, the housekeeper, Polly, her aide-de-camp, and Smart, the keeper, appeared bowing humbly.

Smart, the keeper, pulled the wisp of hay-coloured hair which adorned his sunburnt forehead, kicked out his left heel, as if there were a dog biting at his calves, and brought down his head to a bow. Old Mrs. Blenkinsop dropped a curtsey. Little Polly, her aide-de camp, made a curtsey, and several rapid bows likewise: and Mrs. Blenkinsop, with a great deal of emotion, quavered out, "Welcome to Clavering, Sir Francis. It du my poor eyes good to see one of the family once more."

The speech and the greetings were all addressed to the grand gentleman in fur and braiding, who wore his hat so magnificently on one side, and twirled his mustachios so royally. But he burst out laughing, and said, "You've saddled the wrong horse, old lady—I'm not Sir Francis Clavering what's come to revisit the halls of my ancestors. Friends and vassals! behold your rightful lord!"

And he pointed his hand towards the pale, languid gentleman, who said, "Don't be an ass, Ned."

"Yes, Mrs. Blenkinsop, I'm Sir Francis Clavering; I recollect you quite well. Forgot me, I suppose?—How dy do?" and he took the old lady's trembling hand; and nodded in her astonished face, in a not unkind manner.

Mrs. Blenkinsop declared upon her conscience that she would have known Sir Francis anywhere; that he was the very image of Sir Francis his father, and of Sir John who had gone before.

"O yes—thanky—of course—very much obliged—and that sort of thing," Sir Francis said, looking vacantly about the hall. "Dismal old place, ain't it, Ned? Never saw it but once, when my governor quarrelled with my gwandfather, in the year twenty-thwee."

"Dismal?—beautiful!—the Castle of Otranto!—the Mysteries of Udolpho, by Jove!" said the individual addressed as Ned. "What a fire-place! You might roast an elephant in it. Splendid carved gallery! Inigo Jones, by Jove! I'd lay five to two it's Inigo Jones."

"The upper part by Inigo Jones; the lower was altered by the eminent Dutch architect, Vanderputty, in George the First his time, by Sir Richard, fourth baronet," said the housekeeper.

"O indeed," said the Baronet. "'Gad, Ned, you know everything."

"I know a few things, Frank," Ned answered. "I know that's not a Snyders over the mantel-piece—bet you three to one it's a copy. We'll restore it, my boy. A lick of varnish and it will come out wonderfully, sir. That old fellow in the red gown, I suppose, is Sir Richard?"

"Sheriff of the county, and sate in Parliament in the reign of Queen Anne," said the housekeeper, wondering at the stranger's knowledge; "that on the right is Theodosia, wife of Harbottle, second baronet, by Lely, represented in the character of Venus, the Goddess of Beauty,—her son Gregory, the third baronet, by her side, as Cupid, God of Love, with a bow and arrows; that on the next panel is Sir Rupert, made a knight banneret by Charles the First, and whose property was confuscated by Oliver Cromwell."

"Thank you—needn't go on, Mrs. Blenkinsop," said the Baronet. "We'll walk about the place ourselves. Frosch, give me a cigar. Have a cigar, Mr. Tatham?"

Little Mr. Tatham tried a cigar which Sir Francis's courier handed to him, and over which the lawyer spluttered fearfully. "Needn't come with us, Mrs. Blenkinsop. What's-his-name—you—Smart—feed the horses and wash their mouths. Sha'n't stay long. Come along, Strong,—I know the way: I was here in twenty-thwee, at the end of my

gwandfather's time." And Sir Francis and Captain Strong, for such was the style and title of Sir Francis's friend, passed out of the hall into the reception-rooms, leaving the discomfited Mrs. Blenkinsop to disappear by a side-door which led to her apartments, now the only habitable rooms in the long-uninhabited mansion.

It was a place so big that no tenant could afford to live in it; and Sir Francis and his friend walked through room after room, admiring their vastness and dreary and deserted grandeur. On the right of the hall door were the saloons and drawing-rooms, and on the other side the oak room, the parlour, the grand dining-room, the library, where Pen had found books in old days. Round three sides of the hall ran a gallery, by which, and corresponding passages, the chief bed-rooms were approached, and of which many were of stately proportions and exhibited marks of splendour. On the second story was a labyrinth of little discomfortable garrets, destined for the attendants of the great folks who inhabited the mansion in the days when it was first built: and I do not know any more cheering mark of the increased philanthropy of our own times, than to contrast our domestic architecture with that of our ancestors, and to see how much better servants and poor are cared for at present, than in times when my lord and my lady slept under gold canopies, and their servants lay above them in quarters not so airy or so clean as stables are now.

Up and down the house the two gentlemen wandered, the owner of the mansion being very silent and resigned about the pleasure of possessing it; whereas the Captain, his friend, examined the premises with so much interest and eagerness that you would have thought he was the master, and the other the indifferent spectator of the place. "I see capabilities in it—capabilities in it, sir," cried the Captain. "Gad, sir, leave it to me, and I'll make it the pride of the country, at a small expense. What a theatre we can have in the library here, the curtains between the columns which divide the room! What a famous room for a galop!—it will hold the whole shire. We'll hang the morning parlour with the tapestry in your second salon in the Rue de Grenelle, and furnish the oak room with the Moyen-âge cabinets and the armour. Armour looks splendid against black oak, and there's a Venice glass in the Quai Voltaire, which will suit that high mantelpiece to an inch, sir. The long saloon, white and crimson, of course; the drawing-room yellow satin: and the little drawing-room light blue, with lace over—hey?"

"I recollect my old governor caning me in that little room," Sir Francis said, sententiously; "he always hated me, my old governor."

"Chintz is the dodge, I suppose, for my lady's rooms—the suite in the landing, to the south, the bed-room, the sitting-room, and the dressing-room. We'll throw a conservatory out, over the balcony. Where will you have your rooms?"

"Put mine in the north wing," said the Baronet, with a yawn, "and out of the reach of Miss Amory's confounded piano. I can't bear it. She's scweeching from morning till night."

The Captain burst out laughing. He settled the whole further arrangements of the house in the course of their walk through it; and, the promenade ended, they went into the steward's room, now inhabited by Mrs. Blenkinsop, and where Mr. Tatham was sitting poring over the plan of the estate, and the old housekeeper had prepared a collation in honour of her lord and master.

Then they inspected the kitchen and stables, about both of which Sir Francis was rather interested, and Captain Strong was for examining the gardens; but the Baronet said, "D— the gardens, and that sort of thing!" and finally he drove away from the house as unconcernedly as he had entered it; and that night the people of Clavering learned that Sir Francis Clavering had paid a visit to the Park, and was coming to live in the county.

When this fact came to be known at Chatteris, all the folks in the place were set in commotion: High Church and Low Church, half-pay captains and old maids and dowagers, sporting squireens of the vicinage, farmers, tradesmen, and factory people—all the population in and round about the little place. The news was brought to Fairoaks, and received by the ladies there, and by Mr. Pen, with some excitement. "Mrs. Pybus says there is a very pretty girl in the family, Arthur," Laura said, who was as kind and thoughtful upon this point as women generally are: "a Miss Amory, Lady Clavering's daughter by her first marriage. Of course, you will fall in love with her as soon as she arrives."

Helen cried out, "Don't talk nonsense, Laura." Pen laughed, and said, "Well, there is the young Sir Francis for you."

"He is but four years old," Miss Laura replied. "But I shall console myself with that handsome officer, Sir Francis's friend. He was at church last Sunday, in the Clavering pew, and his mustachios were beautiful."

Indeed the number of Sir Francis's family (whereof the members have all been mentioned in the above paragraphs) was pretty soon known in the town, and everything else, as nearly as human industry and ingenuity could calculate, regarding his household. The park

avenue and grounds were dotted now with town folks of the summer evenings, who made their way up to the great house, peered about the premises, and criticised the improvements which were taking place there. Loads upon loads of furniture arrived in numberless vans from Chatteris and London; and numerous as the vans were, there was not one but Captain Glanders knew what it contained, and escorted the baggage up to the Park House.

He and Captain Edward Strong had formed an intimate acquaintance by this time. The younger Captain occupied those very lodgings at Clavering, which the peaceful Smirke had previously tenanted, and was deep in the good graces of Madame Fribsby, his landlady; and of the whole town, indeed. The Captain was splendid in person and raiment; fresh-coloured, blue-eyed, black-whiskered, broad-chested, athletic—a slight tendency to fulness did not take away from the comeliness of his jolly figure—a braver soldier never presented a broader chest to the enemy. As he strode down Clavering High Street, his hat on one side, his cane clanking on the pavement, or waving round him in the execution of military cuts and soldatesque manœuvres—his jolly laughter ringing through the otherwise silent street—he was as welcome as sunshine to the place, and a comfort to every inhabitant in it.

On the first market-day he knew every pretty girl in the market: he joked with all the women; had a word with the farmers about their stock, and dined at the Agricultural Ordinary at the Clavering Arms, where he set them all dying with laughter by his fun and jokes. "Tu be sure he be a vine feller, tu be sure that he be," was the universal opinion of the gentlemen in top-boots. He shook hands with a score of them, as they rode out of the inn-yard on their old nags waving his hat to them splendidly as he smoked his cigar in the inn-gate. In the course of the evening he was free of the landlady's bar, knew what rent the landlord paid, how many acres he farmed, how much malt he put in his strong beer; and whether he ever run in a little brandy unexcised by kings from Baymouth, or the fishing villages along the coast.

He had tried to live at the great house first; but it was so dull he couldn't stand it. "I am a creature born for society," he told Captain Glanders. "I'm down here to see Clavering's house set in order, for between ourselves, Frank has no energy, sir, no energy: he's not the chest for it, sir (and he threw out his own trunk as he spoke); but I must have social intercourse. Old Mrs. Blenkinsop goes to bed at seven, and takes Polly with her. There was nobody but me and the

Ghost for the first two nights at the great house, and I own it, sir, I like company. Most old soldiers do."

Glanders asked Strong where he had served? Captain Strong curled his moustache, and said with a laugh, that the other might almost ask where he had *not* served. "I began, sir, as cadet of Hungarian Uhlans, and when the war of Greek independence broke out, quitted that service in consequence of a quarrel with my governor, and was one of seven who escaped from Missolonghi, and was blown up in one of Botzaris's fireships, at the age of seventeen. I'll show you my Cross of the Redeemer, if you'll come over to my lodgings and take a glass of grog with me, Captain, this evening. I've a few of those baubles in my desk. I've the White Eagle of Poland; Skrzynecki gave it me" (he pronounced Skrzynecki's name with wonderful accuracy and gusto) "upon the field of Ostrolenko. I was a lieutenant of the fourth regiment, sir, and we marched through Diebitsch's lines—bang thro' 'em into Prussia, sir, without firing a shot. Ah, Captain, that was a mismanaged business. I received this wound by the side of the King before Oporto—where he would have pounded the stock-jobbing Pedroites, had Bourmont followed my advice; and I served in Spain with the King's troops, until the death of my dear friend, Zumalacarreguy, when I saw the game was over, and hung up my toasting-iron, Captain. Alava offered me a regiment; but I couldn't—damme I couldn't—and now, sir, you know Ned Strong—the Chevalier Strong, they call me abroad—as well as he knows himself."

In this way almost everybody in Clavering came to know Ned Strong. He told Madame Fribsby, he told the landlord of the George, he told Baker at the reading-rooms, he told Mrs. Glanders and the young ones, at dinner: and finally, he told Mr. Arthur Pendennis, who, yawning into Clavering one day, found the Chevalier Strong in company with Captain Glanders, and who was delighted with his new acquaintance.

Before many days were over, Captain Strong was as much at home in Helen's drawing-room as he was in Madame Fribsby's first floor; and made the lonely house very gay with his good humour and ceaseless flow of talk. The two women had never before seen such a man. He had a thousand stories about battles and dangers to interest them—about Greek captives, Polish beauties, and Spanish nuns. He could sing scores of songs, in half-a-dozen languages, and would sit down to the piano and troll them off in a rich manly voice. Both the ladies pronounced him to be delightful—and so he was: though,

indeed, they had not had much choice of man's society as yet, having seen in the course of their lives but few persons, except old Portman and the Major, and Mr. Pen, who was a genius, to be sure; but then your geniuses are somewhat flat and moody at home.

And Captain Strong acquainted his new friends at Fairoaks, not only with his own biography, but with the whole history of the family now coming to Clavering. It was he who had made the marriage between his friend Frank and the widow Amory. She wanted rank, and he wanted money. What match could be more suitable? He organised it; he made those two people happy. There was no particular romantic attachment between them; the widow was not of an age or a person for romance, and Sir Francis, if he had his game at billiards and his dinner, cared for little besides. But they were as happy as people could be. Clavering would return to his native place and country, his wife's fortune would pay his encumbrances off, and his son and heir would be one of the first men in the county.

"And Miss Amory?" Laura asked. Laura was uncommonly curious about Miss Amory.

Strong laughed. "Oh, Miss Amory is a muse—Miss Amory is a mystery—Miss Amory is a *femme incomprise*." "What is that?" asked simple Mrs. Pendennis—but the Chevalier gave her no answer; perhaps could not give her one. "Miss Amory paints, Miss Amory writes poems, Miss Amory composes music, Miss Amory rides like Diana Vernon. Miss Amory is a paragon, in a word."

"I hate clever women," said Pen.

"Thank you," said Laura. For her part she was sure she should be charmed with Miss Amory, and quite longed to have such a friend. And with this she looked Pen full in the face, as if every word the little hypocrite said was Gospel truth.

Thus an intimacy was arranged and prepared beforehand between the Fairoaks family and their wealthy neighbours at the Park; and Pen and Laura were to the full as eager for their arrival, as even the most curious of the Clavering folks. A Londoner, who sees fresh faces and yawns at them every day, may smile at the eagerness with which country people expect a visitor. A cockney comes amongst them, and is remembered by his rural entertainers for years after he has left them, and forgotten them, very likely—floated far away from them on the vast London sea. But the islanders remember long after the mariner has sailed away, and can tell you what he said and what he wore, and how he looked and how he laughed. In fine, a new arrival is an event

in the country not to be understood by us, who don't, and had rather not, know who lives next door.

When the painters and upholsterers had done their work in the house, and so beautified it, under Captain Strong's superintendence, that he might well be proud of his taste, that gentleman announced that he should go to London, where the whole family had arrived by this time, and should speedily return to establish them in their renovated mansion.

Detachments of domestics preceded them. Carriages came down by sea, and were brought over from Baymouth by horses which had previously arrived under the care of grooms and coachmen. One day the "Alacrity" coach brought down on its roof two large and melancholy men, who were dropped at the Park lodge with their trunks, and who were Messieurs Frederic and James, metropolitan footmen, who had no objection to the country, and brought with them state and other suits of the Clavering uniform.

On another day, the mail deposited at the gate a foreign gentleman, adorned with many ringlets and chains. He made a great riot at the lodge gate to the keeper's wife (who, being a West country woman, did not understand his English or his Gascon French), because there was no carriage in waiting to drive him to the house, a mile off, and because he could not walk entire leagues in his fatigued state and varnished boots. This was Monsieur Alcide Mirobolant, formerly Chef of his Highness the Duc de Borodino, of H. Eminence Cardinal Beccafico, and at present Chef of the bouche of Sir Clavering, Baronet :—Monsieur Mirobolant's library, pictures, and piano, had arrived previously in charge of the intelligent young Englishman, his aide-de-camp. He was, moreover, aided by a professed female cook, likewise from London, who had inferior females under her orders.

He did not dine in the steward's room, but took his nutriment in solitude in his own apartments, where a female servant was affected to his private use. It was a grand sight to behold him in his dressing-gown composing a *menu*. He always sate down and played the piano for some time before. If interrupted, he remonstrated pathetically. Every great artist, he said, had need of solitude to perfectionate his works.

But we are advancing matters in the fulness of our love and respect for Monsieur Mirobolant, and bringing him prematurely on the stage.

The Chevalier Strong had a hand in the engagement of all the London domestics, and, indeed, seemed to be the master of the house.

There were those among them who said he was the house-steward, only he dined with the family. Howbeit, he knew how to make himself respected, and two of by no means the least comfortable rooms of the house were assigned to his particular use.

He was walking upon the terrace finally upon the eventful day, when, amidst an immense jangling of bells from Clavering Church, where the flag was flying, an open carriage and one of those travelling chariots or family arks, which only English philo-progenitiveness could invent, drove rapidly with foaming horses through the Park gates, and up to the steps of the Hall. The two *battans* of the sculptured door flew open. Two superior officers in black, the large and melancholy gentlemen, now in livery with their hair in powder, the country menials engaged to aid them, were in waiting in the hall, and bowed like tall elms when autumn winds wail in the park. Through this avenue passed Sir Francis Clavering with a most unmoved face: Lady Clavering, with a pair of bright black eyes, and a good-humoured countenance, which waggled and nodded very graciously: Master Francis Clavering, who was holding his mamma's skirt (and who

stopped the procession to look at the largest footman, whose appearance seemed to strike the young gentleman), and Miss Blandy, governess to Master Francis, and Miss Amory, her ladyship's daughter, giving her arm to Captain Strong. It was summer, but fires of welcome were crackling in the great hall chimney, and in the rooms which the family were to occupy.

Monsieur Mirobolant had looked at the procession from one of the lime-trees in the avenue. "Elle est là," he said, laying his jewelled hand on his richly-embroidered velvet waistcoat with glass buttons, "Je t'ai vue; je te bénis, O ma sylphide, O mon ange!" and he dived into the thicket, and made his way back to his furnaces and saucepans.

The next Sunday the same party which had just made its appearance at Clavering Park, came and publicly took possession of the ancient pew in the church, where so many of the Baronet's ancestors had prayed, and were now kneeling in effigy. There was such a run to see the new folks, that the Low Church was deserted, to the disgust of its pastor; and as the state barouche, with the greys and coachman in silver wig, and solemn footmen, drew up at the old churchyard gate, there was such a crowd assembled there as had not been seen for many a long day. Captain Strong knew everybody, and saluted for all the company. The country people vowed my lady was not handsome, to be sure, but pronounced her to be uncommon fine dressed, as indeed she was—with the finest of shawls, the finest of pelisses, the brilliantest of bonnets and wreaths, and a power of rings, cameos, brooches, chains, bangles, and other nameless gimcracks; and ribbons of every breadth and colour of the rainbow flaming on her person. Miss Amory appeared meek in dove-colour, like a vestal virgin—while Master Francis was in the costume then prevalent of Rob Roy Macgregor, a celebrated Highland outlaw. The Baronet was not more animated than ordinarily—there was a happy vacuity about him which enabled him to face a dinner, a death, a church, a marriage, with the same indifferent ease.

A pew for the Clavering servants was filled by these domestics, and the enraptured congregation saw the gentlemen from London with "vlower on their heeds," and the miraculous coachman with his silver wig, take their places in that pew so soon as his horses were put up at the Clavering Arms.

In the course of the service, Master Francis began to make such a yelling in the pew, that Frederic, the tallest of the footmen, was beckoned by his master, and rose and went and carried out Master

Francis, who roared and beat him on the head, so that the powder flew round about, like clouds of incense. Nor was he pacified until placed on the box of the carriage, where he played at horses with John's whip.

"You see the little beggar's never been to church before, Miss Bell," the Baronet drawled out to a young lady who was visiting him; "no wonder he should make a row: I don't go in town neither, but I think it's right in the country to give a good example—and that sort of thing."

Miss Bell laughed and said, "The little boy had not given a particularly good example."

"Gad, I don't know," said the Baronet. "It ain't so bad, neither. Whenever he wants a thing, Frank always cwies, and whenever he cwies he gets it."

Here the child in question began to howl for a dish of sweetmeats on the luncheon table, and making a lunge across the table-cloth, upset a glass of wine over the best waistcoat of one of the guests present, Mr. Arthur Pendennis, who was greatly annoyed at being made to look foolish, and at having his spotless cambric shirt front blotched with wine.

"We do spoil him so," said Lady Clavering to Mrs. Pendennis fondly gazing at the cherub, whose hands and face were now frothed over with the species of lather which is inserted in the confection called *meringues à la crême.*

"Gad I was quite wight," said the Baronet. "He has cwied, and he has got it, you see. Go it, Fwank, old boy."

"Sir Francis is a very judicious parent," Miss Amory whispered. "Don't you think so, Miss Bell? I sha'n't call you Miss Bell—I shall call you Laura. I admired you so at church. Your robe was not well made, nor your bonnet very fresh. But you have such beautiful grey eyes, and such a lovely tint."

"Thank you," said Miss Bell, laughing.

"Your cousin is handsome, and thinks so. He is uneasy *de sa personne.* He has not seen the world yet. Has he genius? Has he suffered? A lady, a little woman in a rumpled satin and velvet shoes —a Miss Pybus—came here, and said he has suffered. I, too, have suffered,—and you, Laura, has your heart ever been touched?"

Laura said "No!" but perhaps blushed a little at the idea or the question, so that the other said,—

"Ah, Laura! I see it all. It is the beau cousin. Tell me everything. I already love you as a sister."

"You are very kind," said Miss Bell, smiling, "and—and it must be owned that it is a very sudden attachment."

"All attachments are so. It is electricity—spontaneity. It is instantaneous. I knew I should love you from the moment I saw you. Do you not feel it yourself?"

"Not yet," said Laura; "but I dare say I shall if I try."

"Call me by my name, then."

"But I don't know it," Laura cried out.

"My name is Blanche—isn't it a pretty name? Call me by it."

"Blanche—it is very pretty indeed."

"And while mamma talks with that kind-looking lady—what relation is she to you? She must have been pretty once, but is rather *passée*; she is not well *gantée*, but she has a pretty hand—and while mamma talks to her, come with me to my own room,—my own, own room. It's a darling room, though that horrid creature, Captain Strong, did arrange it. Are you *épris* of him? He says you are, but I know better; it is the beau cousin. Yes—*il a de beaux yeux. Je n'aime pas les blonds, ordinairement. Car je suis blonde, moi—je suis Blanche et blonde*,"—and she looked at her face and made a *moue* in the glass; and never stopped for Laura's answer to the questions which she had put.

Blanche was fair and like a sylph. She had fair hair with green reflections in it. But she had dark eyebrows. She had long black eyelashes, which veiled beautiful brown eyes. She had such a slim waist, that it was a wonder to behold; and such slim little feet, that you would have thought the grass would hardly bend under them. Her lips were of the colour of faint rosebuds, and her voice warbled limpidly over a set of the sweetest little pearly teeth ever seen. She showed them very often, for they were very pretty. She was always smiling, and a smile not only showed her teeth wonderfully, but likewise exhibited two lovely little pink dimples, that nestled in either cheek.

She showed Laura her drawings, which the other thought charming. She played her some of her waltzes, with a rapid and brilliant finger, and Laura was still more charmed. And she then read her some poems, in French and English, likewise of her own composition, and which she kept locked in her own book—her own dear little book; it was bound in blue velvet, with a gilt lock, and on it was printed in gold the title of "Mes Larmes."

"Mes Larmes!—isn't it a pretty name?" the young lady continued, who was pleased with everything that she did, and did

everything very well. Laura owned that it was. She had never seen anything like it before; anything so lovely, so accomplished, so fragile and pretty; warbling so prettily, and tripping about such a pretty room, with such a number of pretty books, pictures, flowers, round about her. The honest and generous country girl forgot even jealousy in her admiration. "Indeed, Blanche," she said, "everything in the room is pretty; and you are the prettiest of all." The other smiled, looked in the glass, went up and took both of Laura's hands, and kissed them, and sat down to the piano, and shook out a little song.

The intimacy between the young ladies sprang up like Jack's Bean-stalk to the skies in a single night. The large footmen were perpetually walking with little pink notes to Fairoaks; where there was a pretty housemaid in the kitchen, who might possibly tempt those gentlemen to so humble a place. Miss Amory sent music, or Miss Amory sent a new novel, or a picture from the "Journal des Modes," to Laura; or my lady's compliments arrived with flowers and fruit; or Miss Amory begged and prayed Miss Bell to come to dinner; and dear Mrs. Pendennis, if she was strong enough; and Mr. Arthur, if a humdrum party were not too stupid for him; and would send a pony-carriage for Mrs. Pendennis; and would take no denial.

Neither Arthur nor Laura wished to refuse. And Helen, who was, indeed, somewhat ailing, was glad that the two should have their pleasure; and would look at them fondly as they set forth, and ask in her heart that she might not be called away until those two beings whom she loved best in the world should be joined together. As they went out and crossed over the bridge, she remembered summer evenings five-and-twenty years ago, when she, too, had bloomed in her brief prime of love and happiness. It was all over now. The moon was looking from the purpling sky, and the stars glittering there, just as they used in the early well-remembered evenings. He was lying dead far away, with the billows rolling between them. Good God! how well she remembered the last look of his face as they parted. It looked out at her through the vista of long years, as sad and as clear as then.

So Mr. Pen and Miss Laura found the society at Clavering Park an uncommonly agreeable resort of summer evenings. Blanche vowed that she *raffoled* of Laura; and, very likely, Mr. Pen was pleased with Blanche. His spirits came back: he laughed and

rattled till Laura wondered to hear him. It was not the same Pen, yawning in a shooting-jacket, in the Fairoaks parlour, who appeared alert and brisk, and smiling, and well dressed, in Lady Clavering's drawing-room. Sometimes they had music. Laura had a sweet contralto voice, and sang with Blanche, who had had the best continental instruction, and was charmed to be her friend's mistress. Sometimes Mr. Pen joined in these concerts, or oftener looked sweet upon Miss Blanche as she sang. Sometimes they had glees, when Captain Strong's chest was of vast service, and he boomed out in a prodigious bass, of which he was not a little proud.

"Good fellow, Strong—ain't he, Miss Bell?" Sir Francis would say to her. "Plays at *écarté* with Lady Clavering—plays anything—pitch and toss, pianoforty, cwibbage if you like. How long do you think he's been staying with me? He came for a week with a carpet-bag, and gad, he's been staying thwee years. Good fellow, ain't he? Don't know how he gets a shillin', though, by Jove I don't, Miss Lauwa."

And yet the Chevalier, if he lost his money to Lady Clavering, always paid it; and if he lived with his friend for three years, paid for that too—in good humour, in kindness and joviality, in a thousand little services by which he made himself agreeable. What gentleman could want a better friend than a man who was always in spirits, never in the way or out of it, and was ready to execute any commission for his patron, whether it was to sing a song or meet a lawyer, to fight a duel, or to carve a capon?

Although Laura and Pen commonly went to Clavering Park together, yet sometimes Mr. Pen took walks there unattended by her, and about which he did not tell her. He took to fishing the Brawl, which runs through the Park, and passes not very far from the garden-wall; and by the oddest coincidence, Miss Amory would walk out (having been to look at her flowers), and would be quite surprised to see Mr. Pendennis fishing.

I wonder what trout Pen caught while the young lady was looking on? or whether Miss Blanche was the pretty little fish which played round his fly, and which Mr. Pen was endeavouring to hook?

As for Miss Blanche, she had a kind heart; and having, as she owned, herself "suffered" a good deal in the course of her brief life and experience—why, she could compassionate other susceptible beings like Pen, who had suffered too. Her love for Laura and that dear Mrs. Pendennis redoubled: if they were not at the Park, she was not easy unless she herself was at Fairoaks. She played

with Laura; she read French and German with Laura; and Mr. Pen read French and German along with them. He turned sentimental ballads of Schiller and Goethe into English verse for the ladies, and

Blanche unlocked "Mes Larmes" for him, and imparted to him some of the plaintive outpourings of her own tender Muse.

It appeared from these poems that the young creature had indeed suffered prodigiously. She was familiar with the idea of suicide. Death she repeatedly longed for. A faded rose inspired her with such grief that you would have thought she must die in pain of it. It was a wonder how a young creature should have suffered so much —should have found the means of getting at such an ocean of

despair and passion (as a run-away boy who *will* get to sea), and having embarked on it, should survive it. What a talent she must have had for weeping to be able to pour out so many of 'Mes Larmes!"

They were not particularly briny, Miss Blanche's tears, that is the truth; but Pen, who read her verses, thought them very well for a lady—and wrote some verses himself for her. His were very violent and passionate, very hot, sweet, and strong: and he not only wrote verses; but—O, the villain! O, the deceiver! he altered and adapted former poems in his possession, and which had been composed for a certain Miss Emily Fotheringay, for the use and to the Christian name of Miss Blanche Amory.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LITTLE INNOCENT.

"GAD, Strong," one day the Baronet said, as the pair were conversing after dinner over the billiard-table, and that great unbosomer of secrets, a cigar; "Egad, Strong, I wish to the doose your wife was dead."

"So do I. That's a cannon, by Jove! But she won't; she'll live for ever—you see if she don't. Why do you wish her off the hooks, Frank, my boy?" asked Captain Strong.

"Because then you might marry Missy. She ain't bad-looking. She'll have ten thousand, and that's a good bit of money for such a poor old devil as you," drawled out the other gentleman. "And egad, Strong, I hate her worse and worse every day. I can't stand her, Strong; by gad, I can't."

"I wouldn't take her at twice the figure," Captain Strong said, laughing. "I never saw such a little devil in my life."

"I should like to poison her," said the sententious Baronet; "by Jove I should."

"Why, what has she been at now?" asked his friend.

"Nothing particular," answered Sir Francis; "only her old tricks. That girl has such a knack of making everybody miserable that, hang me, it's quite surprising. Last night she sent the governess crying away from the dinner-table. Afterwards, as I was passing Frank's room I heard the poor little beggar howling in the dark, and found his sister had been frightening his soul out of his body, by telling him

stories about the ghost that's in the house. At lunch she gave my lady a turn; and though my wife's a fool, she's a good soul—I'm hanged if she ain't."

"What did Missy do to her?" Strong asked.

"Why, hang me, if she didn't begin talking about the late Amory, my predecessor," the Baronet said, with a grin. "She got some picture out of 'the Keepsake,' and said, she was sure it was like her dear father. She wanted to know where her father's grave was. Hang her father! Whenever Miss Amory talks about him, Lady Clavering always bursts out crying: and the little devil will talk about him in order to spite her mother. To-day when she began, I got in a confounded rage, said I was her father, and—and that sort of thing, and then, sir, she took a shy at me."

"And what did she say about you, Frank?" Mr. Strong, still laughing, inquired of his friend and patron.

"Gad, she said I wasn't her father; that I wasn't fit to comprehend her; that her father must have been a man of genius, and fine feelings, and that sort of thing; whereas I had married her mother for money."

"Well, didn't you?" asked Strong,

"It don't make it any the pleasanter to hear because it's true, don't you know," Sir Francis Clavering answered. "I ain't a literary man and that; but I ain't such a fool as she makes me out. I don't know how it is, but she always manages to—to put me in the hole, don't you understand. She turns all the house round her in her quiet way, and with her confounded sentimental airs. I wish she was dead, Ned."

"It was my wife whom you wanted dead just now," Strong said, always in perfect good humour; upon which the Baronet, with his accustomed candour, said, "Well, when people bore my life out, I *do* wish they were dead, and I wish Missy were down a well with all my heart."

Thus it will be seen from the above report of this candid conversation that our accomplished little friend had some peculiarities or defects of character which rendered her not very popular. She was a young lady of some genius, exquisite sympathies, and considerable literary attainments, living, like many another genius, with relatives who could not comprehend her. Neither her mother nor her stepfather were persons of a literary turn. "Bell's Life" and the "Racing Calendar" were the extent of the Baronet's reading, and Lady Clavering still wrote like a school-girl of thirteen, and with an extraordinary disregard to grammar and spelling. And as Miss Amory felt very keenly that

she was not appreciated, and that she lived with persons who were not her equals in intellect or conversational power, she lost no opportunity to acquaint her family circle with their inferiority to herself, and not only was a martyr, but took care to let everybody know that she was so. If she suffered, as she said and thought she did, severely, are we to wonder that a young creature of such delicate sensibilities should shriek and cry out a good deal? If a poetess may not bemoan her lot, of what earthly use is her lyre? Blanche struck hers only to the saddest of tunes; and sang elegies over her dead hopes, dirges over her early frost-nipt buds of affection, as became such a melancholy fate and Muse.

Her actual distresses, as we have said, had not been up to the present time very considerable: but her griefs lay, like those of most of us, in her own soul—that being sad and habitually dissatisfied, what wonder that she should weep? So "Mes Larmes" dribbled out of her eyes any day at command: she could furnish an unlimited supply of tears, and her faculty of shedding them increased by practice. For sentiment is like another complaint mentioned by Horace, as increasing by self-indulgence (I am sorry to say, ladies, that the complaint in question is called the dropsy), and the more you cry, the more you will be able and desirous to do so.

Missy had begun to gush at a very early age. Lamartine was her favourite bard from the period when she first could feel; and she had subsequently improved her mind by a sedulous study of novels of the great modern authors of the French language. There was not a romance of Balzac and George Sand which the indefatigable little creature had not devoured by the time she was sixteen: and, however little she sympathised with her relatives at home, she had friends, as she said, in the spirit-world, meaning the tender Indiana, the passionate and poetic Lelia, the amiable Trenmor, that high-souled convict, that angel of the galleys,—the fiery Stenio,—and the other numberless heroes of the French romances. She had been in love with Prince Rodolph and Prince Djalma while she was yet at school, and had settled the divorce question, and the rights of woman, with Indiana, before she had left off pinafores. The impetuous little lady played at love with these imaginary worthies, as a little while before she had played at maternity with her doll. Pretty little poetical spirits! it is curious to watch them with those playthings. To-day the blue-eyed one is the favourite, and the black-eyed one is pushed behind the drawers. To-morrow blue-eyes may take its turn of neglect: and it may be an odious little wretch with a burnt nose, or torn head of hair, and

no eyes at all, that takes the first place in Miss's affection, and is dandled and caressed in her arms.

As novelists are supposed to know everything, even the secrets of female hearts, which the owners themselves do not perhaps know, we may state that at eleven years of age Mademoiselle Betsi, as Miss Amory was then called, had felt tender emotions towards a young Savoyard organ-grinder at Paris, whom she persisted in believing to be a prince carried off from his parents; that at twelve an old and hideous drawing-master—(but, ah, what age or personal defects are proof against woman's love?) had agitated her young heart; and then, at thirteen, being at Madame de Carmel's boarding-school, in the Champs Elysées, which, as everybody knows, is next door to Monsieur Rogron's (Chevalier of the Legion of Honour) pension for young gentlemen, a correspondence by letter took place between the *séduisante Miss Betsi* and two young gentlemen of the College of Charlemagne, who were pensioners of the Chevalier Rogron.

In the above paragraph our young friend has been called by a Christian name, different to that under which we were lately presented to her. The fact is, that Miss Amory, called Missy at home, had really at the first been christened Betsy—but assumed the name of Blanche of her own will and fantasy, and crowned herself with it; and the weapon which the Baronet, her stepfather, held in terror over her, was the threat to call her publicly by her name of Betsy, by which menace he sometimes managed to keep the young rebel in order.

Blanche had had hosts of dear, dear, darling friends ere now, and had quite a little museum of locks of hair in her treasure-chest, which she had gathered in the course of her sentimental progress. Some dear friends had married: some had gone to other schools: one beloved sister she had lost from the pension, and found again, O, horror! her darling, her Léocadie, keeping the books in her father's shop, a grocer in the Rue du Bac: in fact, she had met with a number of disappointments, estrangements, disillusionments, as she called them in her pretty French jargon, and had seen and suffered a great deal for so young a woman. But it is the lot of sensibility to suffer, and of confiding tenderness to be deceived, and she felt that she was only undergoing the penalties of genius in these pangs and disappointments of her young career.

Meanwhile, she managed to make the honest lady, her mother, as uncomfortable as circumstances would permit; and caused her

worthy stepfather to wish she was dead. With the exception of Captain Strong, whose invincible good humour was proof against her sarcasms, the little lady ruled the whole house with her tongue. If Lady Clavering talked about Sparrowgrass instead of Asparagus, or called an object a hobject, as this unfortunate lady would sometimes do, Missy calmly corrected her, and frightened the good soul, her mother, into errors only the more frequent as she grew more nervous under her daughter's eye.

It is not to be supposed, considering the vast interest which the arrival of the family at Clavering Park inspired in the inhabitants of the little town, that Madame Fribsby alone, of all the folks in Clavering, should have remained unmoved and incurious. At the first appearance of the Park family in church, Madame noted every article of toilette which the ladies wore, from their bonnets to their brodequins, and took a survey of the attire of the ladies' maids in the pew allotted to them. We fear that Doctor Portman's sermon, though it was one of his oldest and most valued compositions, had little effect upon Madame Fribsby on that day. In a very few days afterwards, she had managed for herself an interview with Lady Clavering's confidential attendant, in the housekeeper's room at the Park ; and her cards in French and English, stating that she received the newest fashions from Paris from her correspondent Madame Victorine, and that she was in the custom of making court and ball dresses for the nobility and gentry of the shire, were in the possession of Lady Clavering and Miss Amory, and favourably received, as she was happy to hear, by those ladies.

Mrs. Bonner, Lady Clavering's lady, became soon a great frequenter of Madame Fribsby's drawing-room, and partook of many entertainments at the milliner's expense. A meal of green tea, scandal, hot Sally-Lunn cakes, and a little novel-reading, were always at the service of Mrs. Bonner, whenever she was free to pass an evening in the town. And she found much more time for these pleasures than her junior officer, Miss Amory's maid, who seldom could be spared for a holiday, and was worked as hard as any factory girl by that inexorable little Muse, her mistress.

And there was another person connected with the Clavering establishment, who became a constant guest of our friend, the milliner. This was the chief of the kitchen, Monsieur Mirobolant, with whom Madame Fribsby soon formed an intimacy.

Not having been accustomed to the appearance or society of

persons of the French nation, the rustic inhabitants of Clavering were not so favourably impressed by Monsieur Alcide's manners and appearance, as that gentleman might have desired that they should be. He walked among them quite unsuspiciously upon the afternoon of a summer day, when his services were not required at the House, in his usual favourite costume, namely, his light green frock or paletot, his crimson velvet waistcoat with blue glass buttons, his pantalon Ecossais of a very large and decided check pattern, his orange satin neckcloth, and his jean-boots, with tips of shiny leather,—these, with a gold embroidered cap, and a richly-gilt cane, or other varieties of ornament of a similar tendency, formed his usual holiday costume, in which he flattered himself there was nothing remarkable (unless, indeed, the beauty of his person should attract observation), and in which he considered that he exhibited the appearance of a gentleman of good Parisian ton.

He walked then down the street, grinning and ogling every woman he met with glances, which he meant should kill them outright, and peered over the railings, and in at the windows, where females were, in the tranquil summer evening. But Betsy, Mrs. Pybus's maid, shrank back with a "Lor bless us!" as Alcide ogled her over the laurel bush; the Misses Baker and their mamma, stared with wonder; and presently a crowd began to follow the interesting foreigner, of ragged urchins and children, who left their dirt-pies in the street to pursue him.

For some time he thought that admiration was the cause which led these persons in his wake, and walked on, pleased himself that he could so easily confer on others so much harmless pleasure. But the little children and dirt-pie manufacturers were presently succeeded by followers of a larger growth, and a number of lads and girls from the factory being let loose at this hour, joined the mob, and began laughing, jeering, hooting, and calling opprobrious names at the Frenchman. Some cried out, "Frenchy! Frenchy!" some exclaimed "Frogs!" one asked for a lock of his hair, which was long and in richly-flowing ringlets; and at length the poor artist began to perceive that he was an object of derision rather than of respect to the rude grinning mob.

It was at this juncture that Madame Fribsby spied the unlucky gentleman with the train at his heels, and heard the scornful shouts with which they assailed him. She ran out of her room, and across the street to the persecuted foreigner; she held out her hand, and, addressing him in his own language, invited him into her abode; and when

she had housed him fairly within her door, she stood bravely at threshold before the gibing factory girls and boys, and said they a pack of cowards to insult a poor man who could not speak t language, and was alone and without protection. The little cr with some ironical cheers and hootings, nevertheless felt the forc Madame Fribsby's vigorous allocution, and retreated before her; the old lady was rather respected in the place, and her oddity and kindness had made her many friends there.

Poor Mirobolant was grateful indeed to hear the language of country ever so ill spoken. Frenchmen pardon our faults in t language much more readily than we excuse their bad English; will face our blunders throughout a long conversation, without least propensity to grin. The rescued artist vowed that Mad Fribsby was his guardian angel, and that he had not as yet met such suavity and politeness among *les Anglaises*. He was as c teous and complimentary to her as if it was the fairest and nobles ladies whom he was addressing: for Alcide Mirobolant paid hom after his fashion to all womankind, and never dreamed of a distinc of rank in the realms of beauty, as his phrase was.

A cream, flavoured with pine-apple—a mayonnaise of lobs which he flattered himself was not unworthy of his hand, or of to whom he had the honour to offer it as an homage, and a bo preserved fruits of Provence, were brought by one of the chef's ai de-camp, in a basket, the next day to the milliner's, and were acc panied with a gallant note to the amiable Madame Fribsby. "I kindness," Alcide said, "had made a green place in the deser his existence,—her suavity would ever contrast in memory with *grossièreté* of the rustic population, who were not worthy to pos such a jewel." An intimacy of the most confidential nature t sprang up between the milliner and the chief of the kitchen; bu do not know whether it was with pleasure or mortification t Madame received the declarations of friendship which the yo Alcides proffered to her, for he persisted in calling her, "*La res table Fribsbi*," "*La vertueuse Fribsbi*,"—and in stating that he sho consider her as his mother, while he hoped she would regard him her son. Ah! it was not very long ago, Fribsby thought, that wo had been addressed to her in that dear French language indicatin different sort of attachment. And she sighed as she looked up at picture of her Carabineer. For it is surprising how young some p ple's hearts remain when their heads have need of a front or a li

hair-dye,—and, at this moment, Madame Fribsby, as she told young Alcide, felt as romantic as a girl of eighteen.

When the conversation took this turn—and at their first intimacy Madame Fribsby was rather inclined so to lead it—Alcide always politely diverged to another subject: it was as his mother that he persisted in considering the good milliner. He would recognise her in no other capacity, and with that relationship the gentle lady was forced to content herself, when she found how deeply the artist's heart was engaged elsewhere.

He was not long before he described to her the subject and origin of his passion.

"I declared myself to her," said Alcide, laying his hand on his heart, "in a manner which was as novel as I am charmed to think it was agreeable. Where cannot Love penetrate, respectable Madame Fribsbi? Cupid is the father of invention!—I inquired of the domestics what were the *plats* of which Mademoiselle partook with most pleasure; and built up my little battery accordingly. On a day when her parents had gone to dine in the world (and I am grieved to say that a grossier dinner at a restaurant, on the Boulevard, or in the Palais Royal, seemed to form the delights of these unrefined persons), the charming Miss entertained some comrades of the pension; and I advised myself to send up a little repast suitable to so delicate young palates. Her lovely name is Blanche. The veil of the maiden is white; the wreath of roses which she wears is white. I determined that my dinner should be as spotless as the snow. At her accustomed hour, and instead of the rude *gigot à l'eau* which was ordinarily served at her too simple table, I sent her up a little *potage à la Reine—à la Reine Blanche* I called it,—as white as her own tint—and confectioned with the most fragrant cream and almonds. I then offered up at her shrine a *filet de merlan à l'Agnes*, and a delicate *plat*, which I have designated as *Eperlan à la Sainte Thérèse*, and of which my charming Miss partook with pleasure. I followed this by two little *entrées* of sweet-bread and chicken; and the only brown thing which I permitted myself in the entertainment was a little roast of lamb, which I laid in a meadow of spinaches, surrounded with croustillons, representing sheep, and ornamented with daisies and other savage flowers. After this came my second service: a pudding *à la Reine Elizabeth* (who, Madame Fribsbi knows, was a maiden princess); a dish of opal-coloured plovers' eggs, which I called *Nid de tourtereaux à la Roucoule;* placing in the midst of them two of those tender volatiles, billing each other, and confectioned with butter; a basket containing

little *gateaux* of apricots, which, I know, all young ladies adore; and a jelly of marasquin, bland, insinuating, intoxicating as the glance of beauty. This I designated *Ambroisie de Calypso à la Souveraine de Mon Cœur.* And when the ice was brought in—an ice of *plombière* and cherries—how do you think I had shaped them, Madame Fribsbi? In the form of two hearts united with an arrow, on which I had laid, before it entered, a bridal veil in cut-paper, surmounted by a wreath of virginal orange-flowers. I stood at the door to watch the effect of this entry. It was but one cry of admiration. The three young ladies filled their glasses with the sparkling Ay, and carried me in a toast. I heard it—I heard Miss speak of me—I heard her say, 'Tell Monsieur Mirobolant that we thank him—we admire him—we love him!' My feet almost failed me as I spoke.

"Since that, can I have any reason to doubt that the young artist has made some progress in the heart of the English Miss? I am modest, but my glass informs me that I am not ill-looking. Other victories have convinced me of the fact."

"Dangerous man!" cried the milliner.

"The blonde misses of Albion see nothing in the dull inhabitants of their brumous isle, which can compare with the ardour and vivacity of the children of the South. We bring our sunshine with us; we are Frenchmen, and accustomed to conquer. Were it not for this affair of the heart, and my determination to marry an Anglaise, do you think I would stop in this island (which is not altogether ungrateful, since I have found here a tender mother in the respectable Madame Fribsbi), in this island, in this family? My genius would use itself in the company of these rustics—the poesy of my art cannot be understood by these carnivorous insularies. No—the men are odious, but the women—the women! I own, dear Fribsbi, are seducing! I have vowed to marry one; and as I cannot go into your markets and purchase, according to the custom of the country, I am resolved to adopt another custom, and fly with one to Gretna Grin. The blonde Miss will go. She is fascinated. Her eyes have told me so. The white dove wants but the signal to fly."

"Have you any correspondence with her?" asked Fribsby, in amazement, and not knowing whether the young lady or the lover might be labouring under a romantic delusion.

"I correspond with her by means of my art. She partakes of dishes which I make expressly for her. I insinuate to her thus a thousand hints, which, as she is perfectly spiritual, she receives. But I want other intelligences near her."

"There is Pincott, her maid," said Madame Fribsby, who, by aptitude or education, seemed to have some knowledge of affairs of the heart; but the great artist's brow darkened at this suggestion.

"Madame," he said, "there are points upon which a gallant man ought to silence himself; though, if he break the secret, he may do so with the least impropriety to his best friend—his adopted mother. Know then, that there is a cause why Miss Pincott should be hostile to me—a cause not uncommon with your sex—jealousy."

"Perfidious monster!" said the confidante.

"Ah, no," said the artist, with a deep bass voice, and a tragic accent worthy of the Porte St. Martin and his favourite melo-drames, "Not perfidious, but fatal. Yes, I am a fatal man, Madame Fribsbi. To inspire hopeless passion is my destiny. I cannot help it that women love me. Is it my fault that that young woman deperishes and languishes to the view of the eye, consumed by a flame which I cannot return? Listen! There are others in this family who are similarly unhappy. The governess of the young Milor has encountered me in my walks, and looked at me in a way which can bear but one interpretation. And Milady herself, who is of mature age, but who has oriental blood, has once or twice addressed compliments to the lonely artist which can admit of no mistake. I avoid the household, I seek solitude, I undergo my destiny. I can marry but one, and am resolved it shall be to a lady of your nation. And, if her fortune is sufficient, I think Miss would be the person who would be most suitable. I wish to ascertain what her means are before I lead her to Gretna Grin."

Whether Alcide was as irresistible a conqueror as his namesake, or whether he was simply crazy, is a point which must be left to the reader's judgment. But the latter, if he has had the benefit of much French acquaintance, has perhaps met with men amongst them who fancied themselves almost as invincible; and who, if you credit them, have made equal havoc in the hearts of *les Anglaises*.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONTAINS BOTH LOVE AND JEALOUSY.

OUR readers have already heard Sir Francis Clavering's candid opinion of the lady who had given him her fortune and restored him to his native country and home, and it must be owned that the Baronet was not far wrong in his estimate of his wife, and that Lady Clavering was not the wisest or the best educated of women. She had had a couple of years education in Europe, in a suburb of London, which she persisted in calling Ackney to her dying day, whence she had been summoned to join her father at Calcutta at the age of fifteen. And it was on her voyage thither, on board the Ramchunder East Indiaman, Captain Bragg, in which ship she had two years previously made her journey to Europe, that she formed the acquaintance of her first husband, Mr. Amory, who was third mate of the vessel in question.

We are not going to enter into the early part of Lady Clavering's history, but Captain Bragg, under whose charge Miss Snell went out to her father, who was one of the Captain's consignees, and part owner

of the Ramchunder and many other vessels, found reason to put the rebellious rascal of a mate in irons, until they reached the Cape, where the Captain left his officer behind: and finally delivered his ward to her father at Calcutta, after a stormy and perilous voyage in which the Ramchunder and the cargo and passengers incurred no small danger and damage.

Some months afterwards Amory made his appearance at Calcutta, having worked his way out before the mast from the Cape—married the rich attorney's daughter in spite of that old speculator—set up as indigo planter and failed—set up as agent and failed again—set up as editor of the "Sunderbund Pilot" and failed again—quarrelling ceaselessly with his father-in-law and his wife during the progress of all these mercantile transactions and disasters, and ending his career finally with a crash which compelled him to leave Calcutta and go to New South Wales. It was in the course of these luckless proceedings that Mr. Amory probably made the acquaintance of Sir Jasper Rogers, the respected Judge of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, who has been mentioned before: and, as the truth must out, it was by making an improper use of his father-in-law's name, who could write perfectly well, and had no need of an amanuensis, that fortune finally forsook Mr. Amory and caused him to abandon all further struggles with her.

Not being in the habit of reading the Calcutta law-reports very assiduously, the European public did not know of these facts as well as people did in Bengal, and Mrs. Amory and her father, finding her residence in India not a comfortable one, it was agreed that the lady should return to Europe, whither she came with her little daughter Betsy or Blanche, then four years old. They were accompanied by Betsy's nurse, who has been presented to the reader in the last chapter as the confidential maid of Lady Clavering, Mrs. Bonner: and Captain Bragg took a house for them in the near neighbourhood of his residence in Pocklington Street.

It was a very hard bitter summer, and the rain it rained every day for some time after Mrs. Amory's arrival. Bragg was very pompous and disagreeable, perhaps ashamed, perhaps anxious, to get rid of the Indian lady. She believed that all the world in London was talking about her husband's disaster, and that the King and Queen and the Court of Directors were aware of her unlucky history. She had a good allowance from her father; she had no call to live in England; and she determined to go abroad. Away she went, then, glad to escape the gloomy surveillance of the odious bully, Captain Bragg. People had no objection to receive her at the continental towns where she

stopped, and at the various boarding-houses, where she royally paid her way. She called Hackney, Ackney, to be sure (though otherwise she spoke English with a little foreign twang, very curious and not unpleasant); she dressed amazingly; she was conspicuous for her love of eating and drinking and prepared curries and pilaus at every boarding-house which she frequented; but her singularities of language and behaviour only gave a zest to her society, and Mrs. Amory was deservedly popular. She was the most good-natured, jovial, and generous of women. She was up to any party of pleasure by whomsoever proposed. She brought three times more champagne and fowls and ham

to the picnics than anyone else. She took endless boxes for the play, and tickets for the masked balls, and gave them away to everybody. She paid the boarding-house people months beforehand; she helped poor shabby mustachioed bucks and dowagers, whose remittances had not arrived, with constant supplies from her purse; and in this way she tramped through Europe, and appeared at Brussels, at Paris, at Milan, at Naples, at Rome, as her fancy led her. News of Amory's death reached her at the latter place, where Captain Clavering was then staying, unable to pay his hotel bill, as, indeed, was his friend, the Chevalier Strong, and the good-natured widow married the descendant

of the ancient house of Clavering—professing, indeed, no particular grief for the scapegrace of a husband whom she had lost: and thus we have brought her up to the present time when she was mistress of Clavering Park.

Missy followed her mamma in most of her peregrinations, and so learned a deal of life. She had a governess for some time; and after her mother's second marriage, the benefit of Madame de Caramel's select pension in the Champs Elysées. When the Claverings came to England, she of course came with them. It was only within a few years, after the death of her grandfather, and the birth of her little brother, that she began to understand that her position in life was altered, and that Miss Amory, nobody's daughter, was a very small personage in a house compared with Master Francis Clavering, heir to an ancient baronetcy, and a noble estate. But for little Frank, she would have been an heiress, in spite of her father: and though she knew and cared not much about money, of which she never had any stint, and though she was a romantic little Muse, as we have seen, yet she could not reasonably be grateful to the persons who had so contributed to change her condition: nor, indeed, did she understand what the matter really was, until she had made some further progress, and acquired more accurate knowledge in the world.

But this was clear, that her stepfather was dull and weak: that mamma dropped her H's, and was not refined in manners or appearance; and that little Frank was a spoiled quarrelsome urchin, always having his way, always treading upon her feet, always upsetting his dinner on her dresses, and keeping her out of her inheritance. None of these, as she felt, could comprehend her: and her solitary heart naturally pined for other attachments, and she sought around her where to bestow the precious boon of her unoccupied affection.

This dear girl, then, from want of sympathy, or other cause, made herself so disagreeable at home, and frightened her mother, and bored her stepfather so much, that they were quite as anxious as she could be that she should settle for herself in life; and hence Sir Francis Clavering's desire expressed to his friend, in the last chapter, that Mrs. Strong should die, and that he would take Blanche to himself as a second Mrs. Strong.

But as this could not be, any other person was welcome to win her: and a smart young fellow, well-looking and well-educated, like our friend Arthur Pendennis, was quite free to propose for her if he had a mind, and would have been received with open arms by Lady

Clavering as a son-in-law, had he had the courage to come forward as a competitor for Miss Amory's hand.

Mr. Pen, however, besides other drawbacks, chose to entertain an extreme diffidence about himself. He was ashamed of his late failures, of his idle and nameless condition, of the poverty which he had brought on his mother by his folly, and there was as much of vanity as remorse in his present state of doubt and distrust. How could he ever hope for such a prize as this brilliant Blanche Amory, who lived in a fine park and mansion, and was waited on by a score of grand domestics, whilst a maid-servant brought in their meagre meal at Fairoaks, and his mother was obliged to pinch and manage to make both ends meet? Obstacles seemed to him insurmountable, which would have vanished had he marched manfully upon them: and he preferred despairing, or dallying with his wishes,—or perhaps he had not positively shaped them as yet,—to attempting to win gallantly the object of his desire. Many a young man fails by that species of vanity called shyness, who might, for the asking, have his will.

But we do not pretend to say that Pen had, as yet, ascertained his: or that he was doing much more than thinking about falling in love. Miss Amory was charming and lively. She fascinated and cajoled him by a thousand arts or natural graces or flatteries. But there were lurking reasons and doubts, besides shyness and vanity, withholding him. In spite of her cleverness, and her protestations, and her fascinations, Pen's mother had divined the girl, and did not trust her. Mrs. Pendennis saw Blanche light-minded and frivolous, detected many wants in her which offended the pure and pious-minded lady; a want of reverence for her parents, and for things more sacred, Helen thought: worldliness and selfishness couched under pretty words and tender expressions. Laura and Pen battled these points strongly at first with the widow—Laura being as yet enthusiastic about her new friend, and Pen not far-gone enough in love to attempt any concealment of his feelings. He would laugh at these objections of Helen's, and say, "Psha, mother! you are jealous about Laura—all women are jealous."

But when, in the course of a month or two, and by watching the pair with that anxiety with which brooding women watch over their sons' affections—and in acknowledging which, I have no doubt there is a sexual jealousy on the mother's part, and a secret pang—when Helen saw that the intimacy appeared to make progress, that the two young people were perpetually finding pretexts to meet, and that

Miss Blanche was at Fairoaks or Mr. Pen at the Park every day, the poor widow's heart began to fail her—her darling project seemed to vanish before her; and, giving way to her weakness, she fairly told Pen one day what her views and longings were; that she felt herself breaking, and not long for this world, and that she hoped and prayed before she went, that she might see her two children one. The late events, Pen's life and career and former passion for the actress, had broken the spirit of this tender lady. She felt that he had escaped her, and was in the maternal nest no more; and she clung with a sickening fondness to Laura, Laura who had been left to her by Francis in Heaven.

Pen kissed and soothed her in his grand patronising way. He had seen something of this, he had long thought his mother wanted to make this marriage—did Laura know anything of it? (Not she,—Mrs. Pendennis said—not for worlds would she have breathed a word of it to Laura)—"Well, well, there was time enough, his mother wouldn't die," Pen said, laughingly: "he wouldn't hear of any such thing, and as for the Muse, she is too grand a lady to think about poor little me—and as for Laura, who knows that she would have me? She would do anything you told her, to be sure. But am I worthy of her?"

"O, Pen, you might be," was the widow's reply; not that Mr. Pen ever doubted that he was; and a feeling of indefinable pleasure and self-complacency came over him as he thought over this proposal, and imaged Laura to himself, as his memory remembered her for years past, always fair and open, kindly and pious, cheerful, tender, and true. He looked at her with brightening eyes as she came in from the garden at the end of this talk, her cheeks rather flushed, her looks frank and smiling—a basket of roses in her hand.

She took the finest of them and brought it to Mrs. Pendennis, who was refreshed by the odour and colour of these flowers; and hung over her fondly and gave it to her.

"And I might have this prize for the asking!" Pen thought, with a thrill of triumph, as he looked at the kindly girl. "Why, she is as beautiful and as generous as her roses." The image of the two women remained for ever after in his mind, and he never recalled it but the tears came into his eyes.

Before very many weeks' intimacy with her new acquaintance, however, Miss Laura was obliged to give in to Helen's opinion, and own that the Muse was selfish, unkind, and inconstant.

Little Frank, for instance, might be very provoking, and might

have deprived Blanche of her mamma's affection, but this was no reason why Blanche should box the child's ears because he upset a glass of water over her drawing, and why she should call him many opprobrious names in the English and French language; and the preference accorded to little Frank was certainly no reason why Blanche should give herself imperial airs of command towards the boy's governess, and send that young lady upon messages through the house to bring her book or to fetch her pocket-handkerchief. When a domestic performed an errand for honest Laura, she was always thankful and pleased; whereas, she could not but perceive that the little Muse had not the slightest scruple in giving her commands to all the world round about her, and in disturbing anybody's ease or comfort, in order to administer to her own. It was Laura's first experience in friendship; and it pained the kind creature's heart to be obliged to give up as delusions, one by one, those charms and brilliant qualities in which her fancy had dressed her new friend, and to find that the fascinating little fairy was but a mortal, and not a very amiable mortal after all. What generous person is there that has not been so deceived in his time?—what person, perhaps, that has not so disappointed others in his turn?

After the scene with little Frank, in which that refractory son and heir of the house of Clavering had received the compliments in French and English, and the accompanying box on the ear from his sister, Miss Laura, who had plenty of humour, could not help calling to mind some very touching and tender verses which the Muse had read to her out of "Mes Larmes," and which began, "My pretty baby brother, may angels guard thy rest," in which the Muse, after complimenting the baby upon the station in life which it was about to occupy, and contrasting it with her own lonely condition, vowed nevertheless that the angel boy would never enjoy such affection as hers was, or find in the false world before him anything so constant and tender as a sister's heart. "It may be," the forlorn one said, "it may be, you will slight it, my pretty baby sweet, You will spurn me from your bosom, I'll cling around your feet! O let me, let me love you! the world will prove to you As false as 'tis to others, but *I* am ever true." And behold the Muse was boxing the darling brother's ears instead of kneeling at his feet, and giving Miss Laura her first lesson in the Cynical philosophy—not quite her first, however,—something like this selfishness and waywardness, something *like this* contrast between practice and poetry, between grand versified

aspirations and every-day life, she had witnessed at home in the person of our young friend Mr. Pen.

But then Pen was different. Pen was a man. It seemed natural, somehow, that he should be self-willed and should have his own way. And under his waywardness and selfishness, indeed, there was a kind and generous heart. Oh, it was hard that such a diamond should be

changed away against such a false stone as this. In a word, Laura began to be tired of her admired Blanche. She had assayed her and found her not true; and her former admiration and delight, which she had expressed with her accustomed generous artlessness, gave way to a feeling, which we shall not call contempt, but which was

very near it; and which caused Laura to adopt towards Miss Amory a grave and tranquil tone of superiority, which was at first by no means to the Muse's liking. Nobody likes to be found out, or, having held a high place, to submit to step down.

The consciousness that this event was impending did not serve to increase Miss Blanche's good humour, and as it made her peevish and dissatisfied with herself, it probably rendered her even less agreeable to the persons round about her. So there arose, one fatal day, a battle-royal between dearest Blanche and dearest Laura, in which the friendship between them was all but slain outright. Dearest Blanche had been unusually capricious and wicked on this day. She had been insolent to her mother; savage with little Frank; odiously impertinent in her behaviour to the boy's governess; and intolerably cruel to Pincott, her attendant. Not venturing to attack her friend (for the little tyrant was of a timid feline nature, and only used her claws upon those who were weaker than herself), she maltreated all these, and especially poor Pincott, who was menial, confidante, companion (slave always), according to the caprice of her young mistress.

This girl, who had been sitting in the room with the young ladies, being driven thence in tears, occasioned by the cruelty of her mistress, and raked with a parting sarcasm as she went sobbing from the door, Laura fairly broke out into a loud and indignant invective—wondered how one so young could forget the deference owing to her elders as well as to her inferiors in station; and professing so much sensibility of her own, could torture the feelings of others so wantonly. Laura told her friend that her conduct was absolutely wicked, and that she ought to ask pardon of Heaven on her knees for it. And having delivered herself of a hot and voluble speech whereof the delivery astonished the speaker as much almost as her auditor, she ran to her bonnet and shawl, and went home across the park in a great flurry and perturbation, and to the surprise of Mrs. Pendennis, who had not expected her until night.

Alone with Helen, Laura gave an account of the scene, and gave up her friend henceforth. "O mamma," she said, "you were right; Blanche, who seems so soft and so kind, is, as you have said, selfish and cruel. She who is always speaking of her affections can have no heart. No honest girl would afflict a mother so, or torture a dependant; and—and, I give her up from this day, and I will have no other friend but you."

On this the two ladies went through the osculatory ceremony which they were in the habit of performing, and Mrs. Pendennis got

a great secret comfort from the little quarrel—for Laura's confession seemed to say, "That girl can never be a wife for Pen, for she is light-minded and heartless, and quite unworthy of our noble hero. He will be sure to find out her unworthiness for his own part, and then he will be saved from this flighty creature, and awake out of his delusion."

But Miss Laura did not tell Mrs. Pendennis, perhaps did not acknowledge to herself, what had been the real cause of the day's quarrel. Being in a very wicked mood, and bent upon mischief everywhere, the little wicked Muse of a Blanche had very soon begun her tricks. Her darling Laura had come to pass a long day; and as they were sitting in her own room together, had chosen to bring the conversation round to the subject of Mr. Pen.

"I am afraid he is sadly fickle," Miss Blanche observed; "Mrs. Pybus, and many more Clavering people, have told us all about the actress."

"I was quite a child when it happened, and I don't know anything about it," Laura answered, blushing very much.

"He used her very ill," Blanche said, wagging her little head. "He was false to her."

"I am sure he was not," Laura cried out; "he acted most generously by her: he wanted to give up everything to marry her. It was she that was false to him. He nearly broke his heart about it: he——"

"I thought you didn't know anything about the story, dearest," interposed Miss Blanche.

"Mamma has said so," said Laura.

"Well, he is very clever," continued the other little dear. "What a sweet poet he is! Have you ever read his poems?"

"Only the 'Fisherman and the Diver,' which he translated for us, and his Prize Poem, which didn't get the prize; and, indeed, I thought it very pompous and prosy," Laura said, laughing.

"Has he never written *you* any poems, then, love?" asked Miss Amory.

"No, my dear," said Miss Bell.

Blanche ran up to her friend, kissed her fondly, called her my dearest Laura at least three times, looked her archly in the face, nodded her head, and said, "Promise to tell no-o-body, and I will show you something."

And tripping across the room daintily to a little mother-of-pearl inlaid desk, she opened it with a silver key, and took out two or three

papers crumpled and rather stained with green, which she submitted to her friend. Laura took them and read them. They were love-verses sure enough—something about Undine—about a Naiad—about a river. She looked at them for a long time; but in truth the lines were not very distinct before her eyes.

"And you have answered them, Blanche?" she asked, putting them back.

"O no! not for worlds, dearest," the other said: and when her dearest Laura had *quite* done with the verses, she tripped back, and popped them again into the pretty desk.

Then she went to her piano, and sang two or three songs of Rossini, whose flourishes of music her flexible little voice could execute to perfection, and Laura sate by, vaguely listening, as she performed these pieces. What was Miss Bell thinking about the while? She hardly knew; but sate there silent as the songs rolled by. After this concert the young ladies were summoned to the room where luncheon was served; and whither they of course went with their arms round each other's waists.

And it could not have been jealousy or anger on Laura's part which had made her silent: for, after they had tripped along the corridor and descended the steps, and were about to open the door which leads into the hall, Laura paused, and looking her friend kindly and frankly in the face, kissed her with a sisterly warmth.

Something occurred after this—Master Frank's manner of eating, probably, or mamma's blunders, or Sir Francis smelling of cigars—which vexed Miss Blanche, and she gave way to that series of naughtinesses whereof we have spoken, and which ended in the above little quarrel.

CHAPTER XXV.

A HOUSE FULL OF VISITORS.

THE difference between the girls did not last long. Laura was always too eager to forgive and be forgiven, and as for Miss Blanche, her hostilities, never very long or durable, had not been provoked by the above scene. Nobody cares about being accused of wickedness. No vanity is hurt by that sort of charge: Blanche was rather pleased than provoked by her friend's indignation, which never would have been raised but for a cause which both knew, though neither spoke of.

And so Laura, with a sigh, was obliged to confess that the romantic part of her first friendship was at an end, and that the object of it was only worthy of a very ordinary sort of regard.

As for Blanche, she instantly composed a copy of touching verses, setting forth her desertion and disenchantment. It was only the old story she wrote, of love meeting with coldness, and fidelity returned by neglect; and some new neighbours arriving from London about this time, in whose family there were daughters, Miss Amory had the advantage of selecting an eternal friend from one of these young ladies, and imparting her sorrows and disappointments to this new sister. The tall footmen came but seldom now with notes to the sweet Laura;

the pony carriage was but rarely despatched to Fairoaks to be at the orders of the ladies there. Blanche adopted a sweet look of suffering martyrdom when Laura came to see her. The other laughed at her friend's sentimental mood, and treated it with a good humour that was by no means respectful.

But if Miss Blanche found new female friends to console her, the faithful historian is also bound to say, that she discovered some acquaintances of the other sex who seemed to give her consolation too. If ever this artless young creature met a young man, and had ten minutes' conversation with him in a garden walk, in a drawing-room window, or in the intervals of a waltz, she confided in him, so to speak—made play with her beautiful eyes—spoke in a tone of tender interest, and simple and touching appeal, and left him, to perform the same pretty little drama in behalf of his successor.

When the Claverings first came down to the Park, there were very few audiences before whom Miss Blanche could perform : hence Pen had all the benefits of her glances, and confidences, and the drawing-room window, or the garden walk all to himself. In the town of Clavering, it has been said, there were actually no young men : in the near surrounding country, only a curate or two, or a rustic young squire, with large feet and ill-made clothes. To the dragoons quartered at Chatteris the Baronet made no overtures : it was unluckily his own regiment : he had left it on bad terms with some officers of the corps —an ugly business about a horse bargain—a disputed play account at blind-Hookey—a white feather—who need ask?—it is not our business to inquire too closely into the bygones of our characters, except in so far as their previous history appertains to the development of this present story.

The autumn, and the end of the Parliamentary Session, and the London season, brought one or two county families down to their houses, and filled tolerably the neighbouring little watering-place of Baymouth, and opened our friend Mr. Bingley's Theatre Royal at Chatteris, and collected the usual company at the Assizes and Race-balls there. Up to this time, the old county families had been rather shy of our friends of Clavering Park. The Fogys of Drummington ; the Squares of Dozley Park ; the Welbores of The Barrow, &c. All sorts of stories were current among these folks regarding the family at Clavering ;—indeed, nobody ought to say that people in the country have no imagination, who hear them talk about new neighbours. About Sir Francis and his Lady, and her birth and parentage, about Miss Amory, about Captain Strong, there had been endless histories

which need not be recapitulated; and the family of the Park had been three months in the county before the great people around began to call.

But at the end of the season, the Earl of Trehawke, Lord Lieutenant of the County, coming to Eyrie Castle, and the Countess Dowager of Rockminster, whose son was also a magnate of the land, to occupy a mansion on the Marine Parade at Baymouth—these great folks came publicly, immediately, and in state, to call upon the family of Clavering Park; and the carriages of the county families speedily followed in the track, which had been left in the avenue by their lordly wheels.

It was then that Mirobolant began to have an opportunity of exercising that skill which he possessed, and of forgetting, in the occupations of his art, the pangs of love. It was then that the large footmen were too much employed at Clavering Park to be able to bring messages, or dally over the cup of small beer with the poor little maids at Fairoaks. It was then that Blanche found other dear friends than Laura, and other places to walk in besides the river-side, where Pen was fishing. He came day after day, and whipped the stream, but the "fish, fish!" wouldn't do their duty, nor the Peri appear. And here, though in strict confidence, and with a request that the matter go no further, we may as well allude to a delicate business, of which previous hint has been given. Mention has been made, in a former page, of a certain hollow tree, at which Pen used to take his station when engaged in his passion for Miss Fotheringay, and the cavity of which he afterwards used for other purposes than to insert his baits and fishing-cans in. The truth is, he converted this tree into a post-office. Under a piece of moss and a stone, he used to put little poems, or letters equally poetical, which were addressed to a certain Undine, or Naiad who frequented the stream, and which, once or twice, were replaced by a receipt in the shape of a flower, or by a modest little word or two of acknowledgment, written in a delicate hand, in French or English, and on pink scented paper. Certainly, Miss Amory used to walk by this stream, as we have seen; and it is a fact that she used pink scented paper for her correspondence. But after the great folks had invaded Clavering Park, and the family coach passed out of the lodge-gates, evening after evening, on their way to the other great country houses, nobody came to fetch Pen's letters at the post-office; the white paper was not exchanged for the pink, but lay undisturbed under its stone and its moss, whilst the tree was reflected into the stream, and the Brawl went rolling by. There was not much in the

letters certainly: in the pink notes scarcely anything—merely a little word or two, half jocular, half sympathetic, such as might be written by any young lady. But oh, you silly Pendennis, if you wanted this one, why did you not speak? Perhaps neither party was in earnest. You were only playing at being in love, and the sportive little Undine was humouring you at the same play.

Nevertheless if a man is baulked at this game, he not unfrequently loses his temper; and when nobody came any more for Pen's poems, he began to look upon those compositions in a very serious light. He felt almost tragical and romantic again, as in his first affair of the heart:—at any rate he was bent upon having an explanation. One day he went to the Hall, and there was a room-full of visitors: on another, Miss Amory was not to be seen; she was going to a ball that night, and was lying down to take a little sleep. Pen cursed balls, and the narrowness of his means, and the humility of his position in the county that caused him to be passed over by the givers of these entertainments. On a third occasion, Miss Amory was in the garden, and he ran thither; she was walking there in state with no less personages than the Bishop and Bishopess of Chatteris and the episcopal family, who scowled at him, and drew up in great dignity when he was presented to them, and they heard his name. The Right Reverend Prelate had heard it before, and also of the little transaction in the Dean's garden.

"The Bishop says you're a sad young man," good-natured Lady Clavering whispered to him. "What have you been a doing of? Nothink, I hope, to vex such a dear Mar as yours? How is your dear Mar? Why don't she come and see me? We an't seen her this ever such a time. We're a goin about a gaddin, so that we don't see no neighbours now. Give my love to her and Laurar, and come all to dinner to-morrow."

Mrs. Pendennis was too unwell to come out, but Laura and Pen came, and there was a great party, and Pen only got an opportunity of a hurried word with Miss Amory. "You never come to the river now," he said.

"I can't," said Blanche, "the house is full of people."

"Undine has left the stream," Mr. Pen went on, choosing to be poetical.

"She never ought to have gone there," Miss Amory answered. "She won't go again. It was very foolish, very wrong: it was only play. Besides, you have other consolations at home," she added, looking him full in the face an instant, and dropping her eyes.

If he wanted her, why did he not speak then? She might have said "Yes" even then. But as she spoke of other consolations at home, he thought of Laura, so affectionate and so pure, and of his mother at home, who had bent her fond heart upon uniting him with her adopted daughter. "Blanche!" he began, in a vexed tone,—"Miss Amory!"

"Laura is looking at us, Mr. Pendennis," the young lady said. "I must go back to the company," and she ran off, leaving Mr. Pendennis to bite his nails in perplexity, and to look out into the moonlight in the garden.

Laura indeed was looking at Pen. She was talking with, or appearing to listen to the talk of, Mr. Pynsent, Lord Rockminster's son, and grandson of the Dowager Lady, who was seated in state in the place of honour, gravely receiving Lady Clavering's bad grammar, and patronising the vacuous Sir Francis, whose interest in the county she was desirous to secure. Pynsent and Pen had been at Oxbridge together, where the latter, during his heyday of good fortune and fashion, had been the superior of the young patrician, and perhaps rather supercilious towards him. They had met for the first time, since they had parted at the University, at the table to-day, and given each other that exceedingly impertinent and amusing demi-nod of recognition which is practised in England only, and only to perfection by University men,—and which seems to say, "Confound you—what do you do here?"

"I knew that man at Oxbridge," Mr. Pynsent said to Miss Bell—"a Mr. Pendennis, I think."

"Yes," said Miss Bell.

"He seems rather sweet upon Miss Amory," the gentleman went on. Laura looked at them, and perhaps thought so too, but said nothing.

"A man of large property in the county, ain't he? He used to talk about representing it. He used to speak at the Union. Whereabouts do his estates lie?"

Laura smiled. "His estates lie on the other side of the river, near the lodge gate. He is my cousin, and I live there."

"Where?" asked Mr. Pynsent, with a laugh.

"Why, on the other side of the river, at Fairoaks," answered Miss Bell.

"Many pheasants there? Cover looks rather good," said the simple gentleman.

Laura smiled again. "We have nine hens and a cock, a pig, and an old pointer."

"Pendennis don't preserve, then?" continued Mr. Pynsent.

"You should come and see him," the girl said, laughing, and greatly amused at the notion that her Pen was a great county gentleman, and perhaps had given himself out to be such.

"Indeed, I quite long to renew our acquaintance," Mr. Pynsent said, gallantly, and with a look which fairly said, "It is you that I would like to come and see"—to which look and speech Miss Laura vouchsafed a smile, and made a little bow.

Here Blanche came stepping up with her most fascinating smile and ogle, and begged dear Laura to come and take the second in a song. Laura was ready to do anything good-natured, and went to the piano; by which Mr. Pynsent listened as long as the duet lasted, and until Miss Amory began for herself, when he strode away.

"What a nice, frank, amiable, well-bred girl that is, Wagg," said Mr. Pynsent to a gentleman who had come over with him from Baymouth—"the tall one I mean, with the ringlets and the red lips—monstrous red, ain't they?"

"What do you think of the girl of the house?" asked Mr. Wagg.

"I think she's a lean, scraggy humbug," said Mr. Pynsent, with great candour. "She drags her shoulders out of her dress: she never lets her eyes alone: and she goes simpering and ogling about like a French waiting-maid."

"Pynsent, be civil," cried the other, "somebody can hear."

"Oh, it's Pendennis of Boniface," Mr. Pynsent said. "Fine evening, Mr. Pendennis; we were just talking of your charming cousin."

"Any relation to my old friend, Major Pendennis?" asked Mr. Wagg.

"His nephew. Had the pleasure of meeting you at Gaunt House," Mr. Pen said with his very best air—the acquaintance between the gentlemen was made in an instant.

In the afternoon of the next day, the two gentlemen who were staying at Clavering Park were found by Mr. Pen on his return from a fishing excursion, in which he had no sport, seated in his mother's drawing-room in comfortable conversation with the widow and her ward. Mr. Pynsent, tall and gaunt, with large red whiskers and an imposing tuft to his chin, was striding over a chair in the intimate neighbourhood of Miss Laura. She was amused by his talk, which was simple, straightforward, rather humorous, and keen, and inter-

spersed with homely expressions of a style which is sometimes called slang. It was the first specimen of a young London dandy that Laura had seen or heard; for she had been but a chit at the time of Mr. Foker's introduction at Fairoaks, nor indeed was that ingenuous gentleman much more than a boy, and his refinement was only that of a school and college.

Mr. Wagg, as he entered the Fairoaks premises with his companion, eyed and noted everything. "Old gardener," he said, seeing Mr. John at the lodge—"old red livery waistcoat—clothes hanging out to dry on the gooseberry bushes—blue aprons, white ducks—gad, they must be young Pendennis's white ducks—nobody else wears 'em in the family. Rather a shy place for a sucking county member, ay, Pynsent?"

"Snug little crib," said Mr. Pynsent, "pretty cozy little lawn."

"Mr. Pendennis at home, old gentleman?" Mr. Wagg said to the old domestic. John answered, "No, Master Pendennis was agone out."

"Are the ladies at home?" asked the younger visitor. Mr. John answered, "Yes, they be;" and as the pair walked over the trim gravel, and by the neat shrubberies, up the steps to the hall-door, which old John opened, Mr. Wagg noted everything that he saw; the barometer and the letter-bag, the umbrellas and the ladies' clogs, Pen's hats and tartan wrapper, and old John opening the drawing-room door, to introduce the new comers. Such minutiæ attracted Wagg instinctively; he seized them in spite of himself.

"Old fellow does all the work," he whispered to Pynsent. "Caleb Balderstone. Shouldn't wonder if he's the housemaid." The next minute the pair were in the presence of the Fairoaks ladies; in whom Pynsent could not help recognising two perfectly well-bred ladies, and to whom Mr. Wagg made his obeisance, with florid bows, and extra courtesy, accompanied with an occasional knowing leer at his companion. Mr. Pynsent did not choose to acknowledge these signals, except by extreme haughtiness towards Mr. Wagg, and particular deference to the ladies. If there was one thing laughable in Mr. Wagg's eyes, it was poverty. He had the soul of a butler who had been brought from his pantry to make fun in the drawing-room. His jokes were plenty, and his good-nature thoroughly genuine, but he did not seem to understand that a gentleman could wear an old coat, or that a lady could be respectable unless she had her carriage, or employed a French milliner.

"Charming place, ma'am," said he, bowing to the widow; "noble

prospect—delightful to us Cockneys, who seldom see anything but Pall-mall." The widow said, simply, she had never been in London but once in her life—before her son was born.

"Fine village, ma'am, fine village," said Mr. Wagg, "and increasing every day. It'll be quite a large town soon. It's not a bad place to live in for those who can't get the country, and will repay a visit when you honour it."

"My brother, Major Pendennis, has often mentioned your name to us," the widow said, "and we have been—amused by some of your droll books, sir," Helen continued, who never could be brought to like Mr. Wagg's books, and detested their tone most thoroughly.

"He is my very good friend," Mr. Wagg said, with a low bow, "and one of the best known men about town, and where known, ma'am, appreciated—I assure you appreciated. He is with our friend Steyne, at Aix-la-Chapelle. Steyne has a touch of the gout, and so, between ourselves, has your brother. I am going to Stillbrook for the pheasant-shooting, and afterwards to Bareacres, where Pendennis and I shall probably meet;" and he poured out a flood of fashionable talk, introducing the names of a score of peers, and rattling on with breathless spirits, whilst the simple widow listened in silent wonder. What a man! she thought; are all the men of fashion in London like this? I am sure Pen will never be like him.

Mr. Pynsent was in the meanwhile engaged with Miss Laura. He named some of the houses in the neighbourhood whither he was going, and hoped very much that he should see Miss Bell at some of them. He hoped that her aunt would give her a season in London. He said, that in the next parliament it was probable he should canvass the county, and he hoped to get Pendennis's interest here. He spoke of Pen's triumph as an orator at Oxbridge, and asked was he coming into parliament too? He talked on very pleasantly, and greatly to Laura's satisfaction, until Pen himself appeared, and as has been said, found these gentlemen.

Pen behaved very courteously to the pair, now that they had found their way into his quarters; and though he recollected with some twinges a conversation at Oxbridge, when Pynsent was present, and in which, after a great debate at the Union, and in the midst of considerable excitement, produced by a supper and champagne-cup, —he had announced his intention of coming in for his native county, and had absolutely returned thanks in a fine speech as the future member; yet Mr. Pynsent's manner was so frank and cordial, that Pen hoped Pynsent might have forgotten his little fanfaronnade, and

any other braggadocio speeches or actions which he might have made. He suited himself to the tone of the visitors then, and talked about Plinlimmon and Magnus Charters, and the old set at Oxbridge, with careless familiarity and high-bred ease, as if he lived with marquises every day, and a duke was no more to him than a village curate.

But at this juncture, and it being then six o'clock in the evening, Betsy, the maid, who did not know of the advent of strangers, walked into the room without any preliminary but that of flinging the door wide open before her, and bearing in her arms a tray, containing three tea-cups, a tea-pot, and a plate of thick bread-and-butter. All Pen's splendour and magnificence vanished away at this—and he faltered and became quite abashed. "What will they think of us?" he thought: and, indeed, Wagg thrust his tongue in his cheek, thought the tea utterly contemptible, and leered and winked at Pynsent to that effect.

But to Mr. Pynsent the transaction appeared perfectly simple—there was no reason present to his mind why people should not drink tea at six if they were minded, as well as at any other hour; and he asked of Mr. Wagg, when they went away, "What the devil he was grinning and winking at, and what amused him?"

"Didn't you see how the cub was ashamed of the thick bread-and-butter? I dare say they're going to have treacle if they are good. I'll take an opportunity of telling old Pendennis when we get back to town," Mr. Wagg chuckled out.

"Don't see the fun," said Mr. Pynsent.

"Never thought you did," growled Wagg between his teeth; and they walked home rather sulkily.

Wagg told the story at dinner very smartly, with wonderful accuracy of observation. He described old John, the clothes that were drying, the clogs in the hall, the drawing-room, and its furniture and pictures; "Old man with a beak and bald head—*feu* Pendennis I bet two to one; sticking-plaster full-length of a youth in a cap and gown—the present Marquis of Fairoaks, of course; the widow when young in miniature, Mrs. Mee; she had the gown on when we came, or in a dress made the year after, and the tips cut off the fingers of her gloves which she stitches her son's collars with; and then the sarving maid came in with their teas; so we left the Earl and the Countess to their bread-and-butter."

Blanche, near whom he sate as he told this story, and who adored *les hommes d'esprit*, burst out laughing, and called him such an odd

droll creature. But Pynsent, who began to be utterly disgusted with him, broke out in a loud voice, and said, "I don't know, Mr. Wagg, what sort of ladies you are accustomed to meet in your own family, but by gad, as far as a first acquaintance can show, I never met two better-bred women in my life, and I hope, ma'am, you'll call upon 'em," he added, addressing Lady Rockminster, who was seated at Sir Francis Clavering's right hand.

Sir Francis turned to the guest on his left, and whispered, "That's what I call a sticker for Wagg." And Lady Clavering, giving the young gentleman a delighted tap with her fan, winked her black eyes at him, and said, "Mr. Pynsent, you're a good feller."

After the affair with Blanche, a difference ever so slight, a tone of melancholy, perhaps a little bitter, might be perceived in Laura's converse with her cousin. She seemed to weigh him, and find him wanting too; the widow saw the girl's clear and honest eyes watching the young man at times, and a look of almost scorn pass over her face, as he lounged in the room with the women, or lazily sauntered smoking upon the lawn, or lolled under a tree there over a book, which he was too listless to read.

"What has happened between you?" eager-sighted Helen asked of the girl. "Something has happened. Has that wicked little Blanche been making mischief? Tell me, Laura."

"Nothing has happened at all," Laura said.

"Then why do you look at Pen so?" asked his mother quickly.

"Look at him, dear mother!" said the girl. "We two women are no society for him: we don't interest him; we are not clever enough for such a genius as Pen. He wastes his life and energies away among us, tied to our apron-strings. He interests himself in nothing: he scarcely cares to go beyond the garden-gate. Even Captain Glanders and Captain Strong pall upon him," she added with a bitter laugh; "and they are men you know, and our superiors. He will never be happy while he is here. Why is he not facing the world, and without a profession?"

"We have got enough, with great economy," said the widow, her heart beginning to beat violently. "Pen has spent nothing for months. I'm sure he is very good. I am sure he might be very happy with us."

"Don't agitate yourself so, dear mother," the girl answered. "I don't like to see you so. You should not be sad because Pen is unhappy here. All men are so. They must work. They must make themselves names and a place in the world. Look, the two captains

have fought and seen battles: that Mr. Pynsent, who came here, and who will be very rich, is in a public office; he works very hard, he aspires to a name and a reputation. He says Pen was one of the best speakers at Oxbridge, and had as great a character for talent as any of the young gentlemen there. Pen himself laughs at Mr. Wagg's celebrity (and indeed he is a horrid person), and says he is a dunce, and that anybody could write his books."

"I am sure they are odious," interposed the widow.

"Yet he has a reputation.—You see the County Chronicle says, 'The celebrated Mr. Wagg has been sojourning at Baymouth—let our fashionables and eccentrics look out for something from his caustic pen.' If Pen can write better than this gentleman, and speak better than Mr. Pynsent, why doesn't he? Mamma, he can't make speeches to us; or distinguish himself here. He ought to go away, indeed he ought."

"Dear Laura," said Helen, taking the girl's hand. "Is it kind of you to hurry him so? I have been waiting. I have been saving up money these many months—to—to pay back your advance to us."

"Hush, mother!" Laura cried, embracing her friend hastily. "It was your money, not mine. Never speak about that again. How much money have you saved?"

Helen said there were more than two hundred pounds at the bank, and that she would be enabled to pay off all Laura's money by the end of the next year.

"Give it him—let him have the two hundred pounds. Let him go to London and be a lawyer: be something, be worthy of his mother—and of mine, dearest mamma," said the good girl; upon which, and with her usual tenderness and emotion, the fond widow declared that Laura was a blessing to her, and the best of girls—and I hope no one in this instance will be disposed to contradict her.

The widow and her daughter had more than one conversation on this subject: the elder gave way to the superior reason of the honest and stronger-minded girl; and, indeed, whenever there was a sacrifice to be made on her part, this kind lady was only too eager to make it. But she took her own way, and did not lose sight of the end she had in view, in imparting these new plans to Pen. One day she told him of these projects, and who it was that had formed them; how it was Laura who insisted upon his going to London and studying; how it was Laura who would not hear of the—the money arrangements when he came back from Oxbridge—being settled just then: how it

was Laura whom he had to thank, if indeed he thought he ought to go.

At that news Pen's countenance blazed up with pleasure, and he hugged his mother to his heart with an ardour that I fear disappointed the fond lady; but she rallied when he said, "By Heaven! she is a noble girl, and may God Almighty bless her! O mother! I have been wearying myself away for months here, longing to work, and not knowing how. I've been fretting over the thoughts of my shame, and my debts, and my past cursed extravagance and follies. I've suffered infernally. My heart has been half-broken—never mind about that. If I can get a chance to redeem the past, and to do my duty to myself and the best mother in the world, indeed, indeed, I will. I'll be worthy of you yet. Heaven bless you! God bless Laura! Why isn't she here, that I may go and thank her?" Pen went on with more incoherent phrases; paced up and down the room, drank glasses of water, jumped about his mother with a thousand embraces—began to laugh—began to sing—was happier than she had seen him since he was a boy—since he had tasted of the fruit of that awful Tree of Life which, from the beginning, has tempted all mankind.

Laura was not at home. Laura was on a visit to the stately Lady Rockminster, daughter to my Lord Bareacres, sister to the late Lady Pontypool, and by consequence a distant kinswoman of Helen's, as her ladyship, who was deeply versed in genealogy, was the first graciously to point out to the modest country lady. Mr. Pen was greatly delighted at the relationship being acknowledged, though perhaps not over well pleased that Lady Rockminster took Miss Bell home with her for a couple of days to Baymouth, and did not make the slightest invitation to Mr. Arthur Pendennis. There was to be a ball at Baymouth, and it was to be Miss Laura's first appearance. The dowager came to fetch her in her carriage, and she went off with a white dress in her box, happy and blushing, like the rose to which Pen compared her.

This was the night of the ball—a public entertainment at the Baymouth Hotel. "By Jove!" said Pen, "I'll ride over—No, I won't ride, but I'll go too." His mother was charmed that he should do so; and, as he was debating about the conveyance in which he should start for Baymouth, Captain Strong called opportunely, said he was going himself, and that he would put his horse, The Butcher Boy, into the gig, and drive Pen over.

When the grand company began to fill the house at Clavering

Park, the Chevalier Strong seldom intruded himself upon its society, but went elsewhere to seek his relaxation. "I've seen plenty of grand dinners in my time," he said, "and dined, by Jove, in a company where there was a king and royal duke at top and bottom, and every man along the table had six stars on his coat; but dammy, Glanders, this finery don't suit me; and the English ladies with their confounded buckram airs, and the squires with their politics after dinner, send me to sleep—sink me dead if they don't. I like a place where I can blow my cigar when the cloth is removed, and when I'm thirsty, have my beer in its native pewter." So on a gala day at Clavering Park, the Chevalier would content himself with superintending the arrangements of the table, and drilling the major-domo and servants; and having looked over the bill of fare with Monsieur Mirobolant, would not care to take the least part in the banquet. "Send me up a cutlet and a bottle of claret to my room," this philosopher would say, and from the windows of that apartment, which commanded the terrace and avenue, he would survey the company as they arrived in their carriages, or take a peep at the ladies in the hall through an œil-de-bœuf which commanded it from his corridor. And the guests being seated, Strong would cross the park to Captain Glanders's cottage at Clavering, or to pay the landlady a visit at the Clavering Arms, or to drop in upon Madame Fribsby over her novel and tea. Wherever the Chevalier went he was welcome, and whenever he came away a smell of hot brandy and water lingered behind him.

The Butcher Boy—not the worst horse in Sir Francis's stable—was appropriated to Captain Strong's express use; and the old Campaigner saddled him and brought him home at all hours of the day or night, and drove or rode him up and down the country. Where there was a public-house with a good tap of beer—where there was a tenant with a pretty daughter who played on the piano—to Chatteris, to the play, or the barracks—to Baymouth, if any fun was on foot there; to the rural fairs or races, the Chevalier and his brown horse made their way continually; and this worthy gentleman lived at free quarters in a friendly country. The Butcher Boy soon took Pen and the Chevalier to Baymouth. The latter was as familiar with the hotel and landlord there as with every other inn round about; and having been accómmodated with a bed-room to dress, they entered the ball-room. The Chevalier was splendid. He wore three little gold crosses in a brochette on the portly breast of his blue coat, and looked like a foreign field-marshal.

The ball was public and all sorts of persons were admitted and

encouraged to come, young Pynsent having views upon the county, and Lady Rockminster being patroness of the ball. There was a quadrille for the aristocracy at one end, and select benches for the people of fashion. Towards this end the Chevalier did not care to penetrate far (as he said he did not care for the nobs); but in the other part of the room he knew everybody—the wine-merchants', innkeepers', tradesmen's, solicitors', squire-farmers' daughters, their sires and brothers, and plunged about shaking hands.

"Who is that man with the blue ribbon and the three-pointed star?" asked Pen. A gentleman in black with ringlets and a tuft stood gazing fiercely about him, with one hand in the arm-hole of his waistcoat and the other holding his claque.

"By Jupiter, it's Mirobolant!" cried Strong, bursting out laughing. "*Bon jour, Chef!—Bon jour, Chevalier!*"

"*De la croix de Juillet, Chevalier!*" said the Chef, laying his hand on his decoration.

"By Jove, here's some more ribbon!" said Pen, amused.

A man with very black hair and whiskers, dyed evidently with the purple of Tyre, with twinkling eyes and white eyelashes, and a thousand wrinkles in his face, which was of a strange red colour, with two under-vests, and large gloves and hands, and a profusion of diamonds and jewels in his waistcoat and stock, with coarse feet crumpled into immense shiny boots, and a piece of particoloured ribbon in his button-hole, here came up and nodded familiarly to the Chevalier.

The Chevalier shook hands. "My friend Mr. Pendennis," Strong said. "Colonel Altamont, of the body-guard of his Highness the Nawaub of Lucknow." That officer bowed to the salute of Pen; who was now looking out eagerly to see if the person he wanted had entered the room.

Not yet. But the band began presently performing "See the Conquering Hero comes," and a host of fashionables—Dowager Countess of Rockminster, Mr. Pynsent and Miss Bell, Sir Francis Clavering, Bart., of Clavering Park, Lady Clavering and Miss Amory, Sir Horace Fogey, Bart., Lady Fogey, Colonel and Mrs. Higgs, —— Wagg, Esq. (as the county paper afterwards described them), entered the room.

Pen rushed by Blanche, ran up to Laura, and seized her hand. "God bless you!" he said, "I want to speak to you—I must speak to you—Let me dance with you." "Not for three dances, dear Pen," she

said, smiling: and he fell back, biting his nails with vexation, and forgetting to salute Pynsent.

After Lady Rockminster's party, Lady Clavering's followed in the procession.

Colonel Altamont eyed it hard, holding a most musky pocket-handkerchief up to his face, and bursting with laughter behind it.

"Who's the gal in green along with 'em, Cap'n?" he asked of Strong.

"That's Miss Amory, Lady Clavering's daughter," replied the Chevalier.

The Colonel could hardly contain himself for laughing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONTAINS SOME BALL-PRACTISING.

NDER some calico draperies in the shady embrasure of a window, Arthur Pendennis chose to assume a very gloomy and frowning countenance, and to watch Miss Bell dance her first quadrille with Mr. Pynsent for a partner. Miss Laura's face was beaming with pleasure and good-nature. The lights and the crowd and music excited her. As she spread out her white robes, and performed her part of the dance, smiling and happy, her brown ringlets flowing back over her fair shoulders from her honest rosy face, more than one gentleman in the room admired and looked after her; and Lady Fogey, who had a house in London, and gave herself no small airs of fashion when in the country, asked of Lady Rockminster who the young person was, mentioned a reigning beauty in London whom, in her ladyship's opinion, Laura was rather like, and pronounced that she would "do."

Lady Rockminster would have been very much surprised if any *protégée* of hers would not "do," and wondered at Lady Fogey's impudence in judging upon the point at all. She surveyed Laura with majestic glances through her eye-glass. She was pleased with the

girl's artless looks, and gay innocent manner. Her manner is very good, her ladyship thought. Her arms are rather red, but that is a defect of her youth. Her *ton* is far better than that of the little pert Miss Amory, who is dancing opposite to her.

Miss Blanche was, indeed, the *vis-à-vis* of Miss Laura, and smiled most killingly upon her dearest friend, and nodded to her, and talked to her, when they met during the quadrille evolutions, and patronised her a great deal. Her shoulders were the whitest in the whole room: and they were never easy in her frock for one single instant: nor were her eyes, which rolled about incessantly: nor was her little figure:—it seemed to say to all the people, "Come and look at me—not at that pink, healthy, bouncing country lass, Miss Bell, who scarcely knew how to dance till I taught her. This is the true Parisian manner—this is the prettiest little foot in the room, and the prettiest little chaussure, too. Look at it, Mr. Pynsent. Look at it, Mr. Pendennis, you who are scowling behind the curtain—I know you are longing to dance with me."

Laura went on dancing, and keeping an attentive eye upon Mr. Pen in the embrasure of the window. He did not quit that retirement during the first quadrille, nor until the second, when the good-natured Lady Clavering beckoned to him to come up to her to the dais or place of honour where the dowagers were, and whither Pen went blushing and exceedingly awkward, as most conceited young fellows are. He performed a haughty salutation to Lady Rockminster, who hardly acknowledged his bow, and then went and paid his respects to the widow of the late Amory, who was splendid in diamonds, velvet, lace, feathers, and all sorts of millinery and goldsmith's ware.

Young Mr. Fogey, then in the fifth form at Eton, and ardently expecting his beard and his commission in a dragoon regiment, was the second partner who was honoured with Miss Bell's hand. He was rapt in admiration of that young lady. He thought he had never seen so charming a creature. "I like you much better than the French girl" (for this young gentleman had been dancing with Miss Amory before), he candidly said to her. Laura laughed, and looked more good-humoured than ever; and in the midst of her laughter caught a sight of Pen, and continued to laugh as he, on his side, continued to look absurdly pompous and sulky. The next dance was a waltz, and young Fogey thought, with a sigh, that he did not know how to waltz, and vowed he would have a master the next holidays.

Mr. Pynsent again claimed Miss Bell's hand for this dance; and

Pen beheld her, in a fury, twirling round the room, her waist encircled by the arm of that gentleman. He never used to be angry before when, on summer evenings, the chairs and tables being removed, and the governess called downstairs to play the piano, he and the Chevalier Strong (who was a splendid performer, and could dance a British hornpipe, a German waltz, or a Spanish fandango, if need were), and the two young ladies, Blanche and Laura, improvised little balls at Clavering Park. Laura enjoyed this dancing so much, and was so animated, that she even animated Mr. Pynsent. Blanche, who could dance beautifully, had an unlucky partner, Captain Broadfoot, of the Dragoons, then stationed at Chatteris. For Captain Broadfoot, though devoting himself with great energy to the object in view, could not get round in time: and, not having the least ear for music, was unaware that his movements were too slow.

So, in the waltz as in the quadrille, Miss Blanche saw that her dear friend Laura had the honours of the dance, and was by no means pleased with the latter's success. After a couple of turns with the heavy dragoon, she pleaded fatigue, and requested to be led back to her place, near her mamma, to whom Pen was talking: and she asked him why he had not asked her to waltz, and had left her to the mercies of that great odious man in spurs and a red coat?

"I thought spurs and scarlet were the most fascinating objects in the world to young ladies," Pen answered. "I never should have dared to put my black coat in competition with that splendid red jacket."

"You are very unkind and cruel and sulky and naughty," said Miss Amory, with another shrug of the shoulders. "You had better go away. Your cousin is looking at us over Mr. Pynsent's shoulder."

"Will you waltz with me?" said Pen.

"Not this waltz. I can't, having just sent away that great hot Captain Broadfoot. Look at Mr. Pynsent, did you ever see such a creature? But I will dance the next waltz with you, and the quadrille too. I am promised, but I will tell Mr. Poole that I had forgotten my engagement to you."

"Women forget very readily," Pendennis said.

"But they always come back, and are very repentant and sorry for what they've done," Blanche said. "See, here comes the Poker, and dear Laura leaning on him. How pretty she looks!"

Laura came up, and put out her hand to Pen, to whom Pynsent made a sort of bow, appearing to be not much more graceful than that domestic instrument to which Miss Amory compared him.

But Laura's face was full of kindness. "I am so glad you have come, dear Pen," she said. "I can speak to you now. How is mamma? The three dances are over, and I am engaged to you for the next, Pen."

"I have just engaged myself to Miss Amory," said Pen; and Miss Amory nodded her head, and made her usual little curtsey. "I don't intend to give him up, dearest Laura," she said.

"Well, then, he'll waltz with me, dear Blanche," said the other. "Won't you, Pen?"

"I promised to waltz with Miss Amory."

"Provoking!" said Laura, and making a curtsey in her turn, she went and placed herself under the ample wing of Lady Rockminster.

Pen was delighted with his mischief. The two prettiest girls in the room were quarrelling about him. He flattered himself he had punished Miss Laura. He leaned in a dandified air, with his elbow over the wall, and talked to Blanche: he quizzed unmercifully all the men in the room—the heavy dragoons in their tight jackets—the country dandies in their queer attire—the strange toilettes of the ladies. One seemed to have a bird's nest in her head; another had six pounds of grapes in her hair, beside her false pearls. "It's a *coiffure* of almonds and raisins," said Pen, "and might be served up for dessert." In a word, he was exceedingly satirical and amusing.

During the quadrille he carried on this kind of conversation with unflinching bitterness and vivacity, and kept Blanche continually laughing, both at his wickedness and jokes, which were good, and also because Laura was again their *vis-à-vis*, and could see and hear how merry and confidential they were.

"Arthur is charming to-night," she whispered to Laura, across Cornet Perch's shell jacket, as Pen was performing *cavalier seul* before them, drawling through that figure with a thumb in the pocket of each waistcoat.

"*Who?*" said Laura.

"Arthur," answered Blanche, in French. "Oh, it's such a pretty name!" And now the young ladies went over to Pen's side, and Cornet Perch performed a *pas seul* in his turn. He had no waistcoat pocket to put his hands into, and they looked large and swollen as they hung before him depending from the tight arms in the jacket.

During the interval between the quadrille and the succeeding waltz, Pen did not take any notice of Laura, except to ask her whether her partner, Cornet Perch, was an amusing youth, and whether she liked him so well as her other partner, Mr. Pynsent. Having planted

which two daggers in Laura's bosom, Mr. Pendennis proceeded to rattle on with Blanche Amory, and to make jokes good or bad, but which were always loud. Laura was at a loss to account for her cousin's sulky behaviour, and ignorant in what she had offended him; however, she was not angry in her turn at Pen's splenetic mood, for she was the most good-natured and forgiving of women, and besides, an exhibition of jealousy on a man's part is not always disagreeable to a lady.

As Pen could not dance with her, she was glad to take up with the active Chevalier Strong, who was a still better performer than Pen; and being very fond of dancing, as every brisk and innocent young girl should be, when the waltz music began she set off, and chose to enjoy herself with all her heart. Captain Broadfoot on this occasion occupied the floor in conjunction with a lady of proportions scarcely inferior to his own; Miss Roundle, a large young woman in a strawberry-ice coloured crape dress, the daughter of the lady with the grapes in her head, whose bunches Pen had admired.

And now taking his time, and with his fair partner Blanche hanging lovingly on the arm which encircled her, Mr. Arthur Pendennis set out upon his waltzing career, and felt, as he whirled round to the music, that he and Blanche were performing very brilliantly indeed. Very likely he looked to see if Miss Bell thought so too; but she did not or would not see him, and was always engaged with her partner Captain Strong. But Pen's triumph was not destined to last long: and it was doomed that poor Blanche was to have yet another discomfiture on that unfortunate night. While she and Pen were whirling round as light and brisk as a couple of opera-dancers, honest Captain Broadfoot and the lady round whose large waist he was clinging, were twisting round very leisurely according to their natures, and indeed were in everybody's way. But they were more in Pendennis's way than in anybody's else, for he and Blanche, whilst executing their rapid gyrations, came bolt up against the heavy dragoon and his lady, and with such force that the centre of gravity was lost by all four of the circumvolving bodies; Captain Broadfoot and Miss Roundle were fairly upset, as was Pen himself, who was less lucky than his partner Miss Amory, who was only thrown upon a bench against a wall.

But Pendennis came fairly down upon the floor, sprawling in the general ruin with Broadfoot and Miss Roundle. The Captain, though heavy, was good-natured, and was the first to burst out into a loud laugh at his own misfortune, which nobody therefore heeded. But Miss Amory was savage at her mishap; Miss Roundle placed on her

séant, and looking pitifully round, presented an object which very few people could see without laughing; and Pen was furious when he heard the people giggling about him. He was one of those sarcastic young fellows that did not bear a laugh at his own expense, and of all things in the world feared ridicule most.

As he got up Laura and Strong were laughing at him; everybody was laughing; Pynsent and his partner were laughing; and Pen boiled with wrath against the pair, and could have stabbed them both on the spot. He turned away in a fury from them, and began blundering out apologies to Miss Amory. It was the other couple's fault—the woman in pink had done it—Pen hoped Miss Amory was not hurt—would she not have the courage to take another turn?

Miss Amory in a pet said she *was* very much hurt indeed, and she would not take another turn; and she accepted with great thanks a glass of water which a cavalier, who wore a blue ribbon and a three-pointed star, rushed to fetch for her when he had seen the deplorable accident. She drank the water, smiled upon the bringer gracefully, and turning her white shoulder at Mr. Pen in the most marked and haughty manner, besought the gentleman with the star to conduct her to her mamma; and she held out her hand in order to take his arm.

The man with the star trembled with delight at this mark of her favour; he bowed over her hand, pressed it to his coat fervidly, and looked round him with triumph.

It was no other than the happy Mirobolant whom Blanche had selected as an escort. But the truth is, that the young lady had never fairly looked in the artist's face since he had been employed in her mother's family, and had no idea but it was a foreign nobleman on whose arm she was leaning. As she went off, Pen forgot his humiliation in his surprise, and cried out, "By Jove, it's the cook!"

The instant he had uttered the words, he was sorry for having spoken them—for it was Blanche who had herself invited Mirobolant to escort her, nor could the artist do otherwise than comply with a lady's command. Blanche in her flutter did not hear what Arthur said; but Mirobolant heard him, and cast a furious glance at him over his shoulder, which rather amused Mr. Pen. He was in a mischievous and sulky humour; wanting perhaps to pick a quarrel with somebody; but the idea of having insulted a cook, or that such an individual should have any feeling of honour at all, did not much enter into the mind of this lofty young aristocrat, the apothecary's son.

It had never entered that poor artist's head, that he as a man was not equal to any other mortal, or that there was anything in his position

so degrading as to prevent him from giving his arm to a lady who asked for it. He had seen in the fêtes in his own country fine ladies, not certainly demoiselles (but the demoiselle Anglaise he knew was a great deal more free than the spinster in France) join in the dance with Blaise or Pierre; and he would have taken Blanche up to Lady Clavering, and possibly have asked her to dance too, but he heard Pen's exclamation, which struck him as if it had shot him, and cruelly humiliated and angered him. She did not know what caused him to start, and to grind a Gascon oath between his teeth.

But Strong, who was acquainted with the poor fellow's state of mind, having had the interesting information from our friend Madame Fribsby, was luckily in the way when wanted, and saying something rapidly in Spanish, which the other understood, the Chevalier begged Miss Amory to come and take an ice before she went back to Lady Clavering. Upon which the unhappy Mirobolant relinquished the arm which he had held for a minute, and with a most profound and piteous bow, fell back. "Don't you know who it is?" Strong asked of Miss Amory, as he led her away. "It is the chef Mirobolant."

"How should I know?" asked Blanche. "He has a *croix*; he is very *distingué*; he has beautiful eyes."

"The poor fellow is mad for your *beaux yeux*, I believe," Strong said. "He is a very good cook, but he is not quite right in the head."

"What did you say to him in the unknown tongue?" asked Miss Blanche.

"He is a Gascon, and comes from the borders of Spain," Strong answered. "I told him he would lose his place if he walked with you."

"Poor Monsieur Mirobolant!" said Blanche.

"Did you see the look he gave Pendennis?"—Strong asked, enjoying the idea of the mischief—"I think he would like to run little Pen through with one of his spits."

"He is an odious, conceited, clumsy creature, that Mr. Pen," said Blanche.

"Broadfoot looked as if he would like to kill him too, so did Pynsent," Strong said. "What ice will you have—water ice or cream ice?"

"Water ice. Who is that odd man staring at me—he is *décoré* too."

"That is my friend Colonel Altamont, a very queer character, in the service of the Nawaub of Lucknow. Hallo! what's that noise.

I'll be back in an instant," said the Chevalier, and sprang out of the room to the ball-room, where a scuffle and a noise of high voices was heard.

The refreshment-room, in which Miss Amory now found herself, was a room set apart for the purposes of supper, which Mr. Rincer the landlord had provided for those who chose to partake, at the rate of five shillings per head. Also, refreshments of a superior class were here ready for the ladies and gentlemen of the county families who came to the ball; but the commoner sort of persons were kept out of the room by a waiter who stood at the portal, and who said that was a select room for Lady Clavering and Lady Rockminster's parties, and not to be opened to the public till supper-time, which was not to be until past midnight. Pynsent, who danced with his constituents' daughters, took them and their mammas in for their refreshment there. Strong, who was manager and master of the revels wherever he went, had of course the *entrée*—and the only person who was now occupying the room, was the gentleman with the black wig and the orders in his button-hole; the officer in the service of his Highness the Nawaub of Lucknow.

This gentleman had established himself very early in the evening in this apartment, where, saying he was confoundedly thirsty, he called for a bottle of champagne. At this order, the waiter instantly supposed that he had to do with a grandee, and the Colonel sate down and began to eat his supper and absorb his drink, and enter affably into conversation with anybody who entered the room.

Sir Francis Clavering and Mr. Wagg found him there; when they left the ball-room, which they did pretty early—Sir Francis to go and smoke a cigar, and look at the people gathered outside the ball-room on the shore, which he declared was much better fun than to remain within; Mr. Wagg to hang on to a Baronet's arm, as he was always pleased to do on the arm of the greatest man in the company. Colonel Altamont had stared at these gentlemen in so odd a manner, as they passed through the "Select" room, that Clavering made inquiries of the landlord who he was, and hinted a strong opinion that the officer of the Nawaub's service was drunk.

Mr. Pynsent, too, had had the honour of a conversation with the servant of the Indian potentate. It was Pynsent's cue to speak to everybody; (which he did, to do him justice, in the most ungracious manner;) and he took the gentleman in the black wig for some constituent, some merchant captain, or other outlandish man of the place. Mr. Pynsent, then, coming into the refreshment-room with a

lady, the wife of a constituent, on his arm, the Colonel asked him if he would try a glass of Sham? Pynsent took it with great gravity, bowed, tasted the wine, and pronounced it excellent, and with the

utmost politeness retreated before Colonel Altamont. This gravity and decorum routed and surprised the Colonel more than any other kind of behaviour probably would: he stared after Pynsent stupidly, and pronounced to the landlord over the counter that he was a rum one. Mr. Rincer blushed, and hardly knew what to say. Mr. Pynsent was a county Earl's grandson, going to set up as a Parliament man. Colonel Altamont, on the other hand, wore orders and diamonds, jingled sovereigns constantly in his pocket, and paid his way like a

man; so not knowing what to say, Mr. Rincer said, "Yes, Colonel—yes, ma'am, did you say tea? Cup a tea for Mr. Jones, Mrs. R.," and so got off that discussion regarding Mr. Pynsent's qualities, into which the Nizam's officer appeared inclined to enter.

In fact, if the truth must be told, Mr. Altamont, having remained at the buffet almost all night, and employed himself very actively whilst there, had considerably flushed his brain by drinking, and he was still going on drinking when Mr. Strong and Miss Amory entered the room.

When the Chevalier ran out of the apartment, attracted by the noise in the dancing-room, the Colonel rose from his chair with his little red eyes glowing like coals, and, with rather an unsteady gait, advanced towards Blanche, who was sipping her ice. She was absorbed in absorbing it, for it was very fresh and good; or she was not curious to know what was going on in the adjoining room, although the waiters were, who ran after Chevalier Strong. So that when she looked up from her glass, she beheld this strange man staring at her out of his little red eyes. "Who was he? It was quite exciting."

"And so you're Betsy Amory," said he, after gazing at her. "Betsy Amory, by Jove!"

"Who—who speaks to me?" said Betsy, alias Blanche.

But the noise in the ball-room is really becoming so loud, that we must rush back thither, and see what is the cause of the disturbance.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHICH IS BOTH QUARRELSOME AND SENTIMENTAL.

IVIL war was raging, high words passing, people pushing and squeezing together in an unseemly manner, round a window in the corner of the ball-room, close by the door through which the Chevalier Strong shouldered his way. Through the opened window, the crowd in the street below was sending up sarcastic remarks, such as "Pitch into him!" "Where's the police?" and the like; and a ring of individuals, among whom Madame Fribsby was conspicuous, was gathered round Monsieur Alcide Mirobolant on the one side; whilst several gentlemen and ladies surrounded our friend Arthur Pendennis on the other. Strong penetrated into this assembly, elbowing by Madame Fribsby, who was charmed at the Chevalier's appearance, and cried, "Save him, save him!" in frantic and pathetic accents.

The cause of the disturbance, it appeared, was the angry little chef of Sir Francis Clavering's culinary establishment. Shortly after Strong had quitted the room, and whilst Mr. Pen, greatly irate at his downfall in the waltz, which had made him look ridiculous in the eyes of the nation, and by Miss Amory's behaviour to him, which had still further insulted his dignity, was endeavouring to get some

coolness of body and temper, by looking out of window towards the sea, which was sparkling in the distance, and murmuring in a wonderful calm—whilst he was really trying to compose himself, and owning to himself, perhaps, that he had acted in a very absurd and peevish manner during the night—he felt a hand upon his shoulder; and, on looking round, beheld, to his utter surprise and horror, that the hand in question belonged to Monsieur Mirobolant, whose eyes were glaring out of his pale face and ringlets at Mr. Pen. To be tapped on the shoulder by a French cook was a piece of familiarity which made the blood of the Pendennises to boil up in the veins of their descendant, and he was astounded, almost more than enraged, at such an indignity.

"You speak French?" Mirobolant said in his own language, to Pen.

"What is that to you, pray?" said Pen, in English.

"At any rate, you understand it?" continued the other, with a bow.

"Yes sir," said Pen, with a stamp of his foot; "I understand it pretty well."

"Vous me comprendrez alors, Monsieur Pendennis," replied the other, rolling out his r with Gascon force, "quand je vous dis que vous êtes un lâche. Monsieur Pendennis—un lâche, entendez-vous?"

"What?" said Pen, starting round on him.

"You understand the meaning of the word and its consequences among men of honour?" the artist said, putting his hand on his hip, and staring at Pen.

"The consequences are, that I will fling you out of window, you—impudent scoundrel," bawled out Mr. Pen; and darting upon the Frenchman, he would very likely have put his threat into execution, for the window was at hand, and the artist by no means a match for the young gentleman—had not Captain Broadfoot and another heavy officer flung themselves between the combatants,—had not the ladies begun to scream,—had not the fiddles stopped,—had not the crowd of people come running in that direction,—had not Laura, with a face of great alarm, looked over their heads and asked for Heaven's sake what was wrong—had not the opportune Strong made his appearance from the refreshment-room, and found Alcide grinding his teeth, and jabbering oaths in his Gascon French, and Pen looking uncommonly wicked, although trying to appear as calm as possible, when the ladies and the crowd came up.

"What has happened?" Strong asked of the chef, in Spanish.

"I am Chevalier de Juillet," said the other, slapping his breast, "and he has insulted me."

"What has he said to you?" asked Strong.

"Il m'a appelé—*Cuisinier*," hissed out the little Frenchman.

Strong could hardly help laughing. "Come away with me, my poor Chevalier," he said. "We must not quarrel before ladies. Come away; I will carry your message to Mr. Pendennis.—The poor fellow is not right in his head," he whispered to one or two people about him;—and others, and anxious Laura's face visible amongst these, gathered round Pen and asked the cause of the disturbance.

Pen did not know. "The man was going to give his arm to a young lady, on which I said that he was a cook, and the man called me a coward and challenged me to fight. I own I was so surprised and indignant, that if you gentlemen had not stopped me, I should have thrown him out of window," Pen said.

"D—— him, serve him right, too,—the d—— impudent foreign scoundrel," the gentlemen said.

"I—I'm very sorry if I hurt his feelings, though," Pen added: and Laura was glad to hear him say that; although some of the young bucks said, "No, hang the fellow,—hang those impudent foreigners—little thrashing would do them good."

"You will go and shake hands with him before you go to sleep—won't you, Pen?" said Laura, coming up to him. "Foreigners may be more susceptible than we are, and have different manners. If you hurt a poor man's feelings, I am sure you would be the first to ask his pardon. Wouldn't you, dear Pen?"

She looked all forgiveness and gentleness, like an angel, as she spoke, and Pen took both her hands, and looked into her kind face, and said indeed he would.

"How fond that girl is of me!" he thought, as she stood gazing at him. "Shall I speak to her now? No—not now. I must have this absurd business with the Frenchman over."

Laura asked—Wouldn't he stop and dance with her? She was as anxious to keep him in the room as he to quit it. "Won't you stop and waltz with me, Pen? I'm not afraid to waltz with you."

This was an affectionate but an unlucky speech. Pen saw himself prostrate on the ground, having tumbled over Miss Roundle and the dragoon, and flung Blanche up against the wall—saw himself on the ground, and all the people laughing at him, Laura and Pynsent amongst them.

"I shall never dance again," he replied, with a dark and determined face. "Never. I'm surprised you should ask me."

"Is it because you can't get Blanche for a partner?" asked Laura, with a wicked, unlucky captiousness.

"Because I don't wish to make a fool of myself, for other people to laugh at me," Pen answered—"for *you* to laugh at me, Laura. I saw you and Pynsent. By Jove! no man shall laugh at me."

"Pen, Pen, don't be so wicked!" cried out the poor girl, hurt at the morbid perverseness and savage vanity of Pen. He was glaring round in the direction of Mr. Pynsent as if he would have liked to engage that gentleman as he had done the cook. "Who thinks the worse of you for stumbling in a waltz?" If Laura does, we don't. "Why are you so sensitive, and ready to think evil?"

Here again, by ill luck, Mr. Pynsent came up to Laura, and said, "I have it in command from Lady Rockminster to ask whether I may take you in to supper?"

"I—I was going in with my cousin," Laura said.

"O—pray, no!" said Pen. "You are in such good hands, that I can't do better than leave you: and I'm going home."

"Good night, Mr. Pendennis," Pynsent said, drily, to which speech (which in fact meant, "Go to the deuce for an insolent, jealous, impertinent jackanapes, whose ears I should like to box") Mr. Pendennis did not vouchsafe any reply, except a bow: and, in spite of Laura's imploring looks, he left the room.

"How beautifully calm and bright the night outside is!" said Mr. Pynsent; "and what a murmur the sea is making! It would be pleasanter to be walking on the beach, than in this hot room."

"Very," said Laura.

"What a strange congregation of people!" continued Pynsent. "I have had to go up and perform the agreeable to most of them—the attorney's daughters—the apothecary's wife—I scarcely know whom. There was a man in the refreshment-room, who insisted upon treating me to champagne—a seafaring looking man—extraordinarily dressed, and seeming half tipsy. As a public man, one is bound to conciliate all these people, but it is a hard task—especially when one would so very much like to be elsewhere"—and he blushed rather as he spoke.

"I beg your pardon," said Laura—"I—I was not listening. Indeed—I was frightened about that quarrel between my cousin and that—that—French person."

"Your cousin has been rather unlucky to-night," Pynsent said. "There are three or four persons whom he has not succeeded in pleasing—Captain Broadwood; what is his name—the officer—and the young lady in red with whom he danced—and Miss Blanche—and the poor chef—and I don't think he seemed to be particularly pleased with me."

"Didn't he leave me in charge to you?" Laura said, looking up into Mr. Pynsent's face, and dropping her eyes instantly, like a guilty little story-telling coquette.

"Indeed, I can forgive him a good deal for that," Pynsent eagerly cried out, and she took his arm, and he led off his little prize in the direction of the supper-room.

She had no great desire for that repast, though it was served in Rincer's well-known style, as the county paper said, giving an account of the entertainment afterwards; indeed, she was very *distraite*; and exceedingly pained and unhappy about Pen. Captious and quarrelsome; jealous and selfish; fickle and violent and unjust when his anger led him astray; how could her mother (as indeed Helen had by a thousand words and hints) ask her to give her heart to such a man? and suppose she were to do so, would it make him happy?

But she got some relief at length, when, at the end of half an hour—a long half-hour it had seemed to her—a waiter brought her a little note in pencil from Pen, who said, "I met Cooky below ready to fight me; and I asked his pardon. I'm glad I did it. I wanted to speak to you to-night, but will keep what I had to say till you come home. God bless you. Dance away all night with Pynsent, and be very happy. PEN."—Laura was very thankful for this letter, and to think that there was goodness and forgiveness still in her mother's boy.

Pen went downstairs, his heart reproaching him for his absurd behaviour to Laura, whose gentle and imploring looks followed and rebuked him; and he was scarcely out of the ball-room door before he longed to turn back and ask her pardon. But he remembered that he had left her with that confounded Pynsent. He could not apologise before *him*. He would compromise and forget his wrath, and make his peace with the Frenchman.

The Chevalier was pacing down below in the hall of the inn when Pen descended from the ball-room; and he came up to Pen, with all sorts of fun and mischief lighting up his jolly face.

"I have got him in the coffee-room," he said, "with a brace of

pistols and a candle. Or would you like swords on the beach? Mirobolant is a dead hand with the foils, and killed four *gardes-du-corps* with his own point in the barricades of July."

"Confound it," said Pen, in a fury, "I can't fight a cook!"

"He is a Chevalier of July," replied the other. "They present arms to him in his own country."

"And do you ask me, Captain Strong, to go out with a servant?" Pen asked fiercely; "I'll call a policeman for *him*; but—but—"

"You'll invite me to hair triggers?" cried Strong, with a laugh. "Thank you for nothing; I was but joking. I came to settle quarrels, not to fight them. I have been soothing down Mirobolant; I have told him that you did not apply the word 'Cook' to him in an offensive sense: that it was contrary to all the customs of the country that a hired officer of a household, as I called it, should give his arm to the daughter of the house." And then he told Pen the grand secret which he had had from Madame Fribsby, of the violent passion under which the poor artist was labouring.

When Arthur heard this tale, he broke out into a hearty laugh, in which Strong joined, and his rage against the poor cook vanished at once. He had been absurdly jealous himself all the evening, and had longed for a pretext to insult Pynsent. He remembered how jealous he had been of Oaks in his first affair; he was ready to pardon anything to a man under a passion like that: and he went into the coffee-room where Mirobolant was waiting, with an outstretched hand, and made him a speech in French, in which he declared that he was "Sincèrement fâché d'avoir usé une expression qui avoit pu blesser Monsieur Mirobolant, et qu'il donnoit sa parole comme un gentilhomme qu'il ne l'avoit jamais, jamais—intendé," said Pen, who made a shot at a French word for "intended," and was secretly much pleased with his own fluency and correctness in speaking that language.

"Bravo, bravo!" cried Strong, as much amused with Pen's speech as pleased by his kind manner. "And the Chevalier Mirobolant of course withdraws, and sincerely regrets the expression of which he made use."

"Monsieur Pendennis has disproved my words himself," said Alcide with great politeness; "he has shown that he is a *galant homme*."

And so they shook hands and parted, Arthur in the first place dispatching his note to Laura before he and Strong committed themselves to the Butcher Boy.

As they drove along, Strong complimented Pen upon his behaviour, as well as upon his skill in French. "You're a good fellow, Pendennis, and you speak French like Chateaubriand, by Jove."

"I've been accustomed to it from my youth upwards," said Pen; and Strong had the grace not to laugh for five minutes, when he exploded into fits of hilarity which Pendennis has never, perhaps, understood up to this day.

It was daybreak when they got to the Brawl, where they separated. By that time the ball at Baymouth was over too. Madame Fribsby and Mirobolant were on their way home in the Clavering fly; Laura was in bed with an easy heart and asleep at Lady Rockminster's; and the Claverings at rest at the inn at Baymouth, where they had quarters for the night. A short time after the disturbance between Pen and the chef, Blanche had come out of the refreshment-room, looking as pale as a lemon-ice. She told her maid, having no other *confidante* at hand, that she had met with the most romantic adventure—the most singular man—one who had known the author of her being—her persecuted—her unhappy—her heroic—her murdered father; and she began a sonnet to his manes before she went to sleep.

So Pen returned to Fairoaks, in company with his friend the Chevalier, without having uttered a word of the message which he had been so anxious to deliver to Laura at Baymouth. He could wait, however, until her return home, which was to take place on the succeeding day. He was not seriously jealous of the progress made by Mr. Pynsent in her favour; and he felt pretty certain that in this, as in any other family arrangement, he had but to ask and have, and Laura, like his mother, could refuse him nothing.

When Helen's anxious looks inquired of him what had happened at Baymouth, and whether her darling project was fulfilled, Pen, in a gay tone, told of the calamity which had befallen; laughingly said, that no man could think about declarations under such a mishap, and made light of the matter. "There will be plenty of time for sentiment, dear mother, when Laura comes back," he said, and he looked in the glass with a killing air, and his mother put his hair off his forehead and kissed him, and of course thought, for her part, that no woman could resist him; and was exceedingly happy that day.

When he was not with her, Mr. Pen occupied himself in packing books and portmanteaus, burning and arranging papers, cleaning his gun and putting it into its case: in fact, in making dispositions for departure. For though he was ready to marry, this gentleman was

eager to go to London too, rightly considering that at three-and-twenty it was quite time for him to begin upon the serious business of life, and to set about making a fortune as quickly as possible.

The means to this end he had already shaped out for himself. "I shall take chambers," he said, "and enter myself at an Inn of Court. With a couple of hundred pounds I shall be able to carry through the first year very well; after that I have little doubt my pen will support me, as it is doing with several Oxbridge men now in town. I have a tragedy, a comedy, and a novel, all nearly finished, and for which I can't fail to get a price. And so I shall be able to live pretty well, without drawing upon my poor mother, until I have made my way at the bar. Then, some day I will come back and make her dear soul happy by marrying Laura. She is as good and as sweet-tempered a girl as ever lived, besides being really very good-looking, and the engagement will serve to steady me,—won't it, Ponto?" Thus smoking his pipe, and talking to his dog as he sauntered through the gardens and orchards of the little domain of Fairoaks, this young day-dreamer built castles in the air for himself: "Yes, she'll steady me, won't she? And you'll miss me when I've gone, won't you, old boy?" he asked of Ponto, who quivered his tail and thrust his brown nose into his master's fist. Ponto licked his hand and shoe, as they all did in that house, and Mr. Pen received their homage as other folks do the flattery which they get.

Laura came home rather late in the evening of the second day; and Mr. Pynsent, as ill luck would have it, drove her from Clavering. The poor girl could not refuse his offer, but his appearance brought a dark cloud upon the brow of Arthur Pendennis. Laura saw this, and was pained by it: the eager widow, however, was aware of nothing, and being anxious, doubtless, that the delicate question should be asked at once, was for going to bed very soon after Laura's arrival, and rose for that purpose to leave the sofa where she now generally lay, and where Laura would come and sit and work or read by her. But when Helen rose, Laura said, with a blush and rather an alarmed voice, that she was also very tired and wanted to go to bed: so that the widow was disappointed in her scheme for that night at least, and Mr. Pen was left another day in suspense regarding his fate.

His dignity was offended at being thus obliged to remain in the ante-chamber when he wanted an audience. Such a sultan as he, could not afford to be kept waiting. However, he went to bed and slept upon his disappointment pretty comfortably, and did not wake

until the early morning, when he looked up and saw his mother standing in his room.

"Dear Pen, rouse up," said this lady. "Do not be lazy. It is the most beautiful morning in the world. I have not been able to sleep since day-break; and Laura has been out for an hour. She is in the garden. Everybody ought to be in the garden and out on such a morning as this."

Pen laughed. He saw what thoughts were uppermost in the simple woman's heart. His good-natured laughter cheered the widow. "Oh you profound dissembler," he said, kissing his mother. "Oh you artful creature! Can nobody escape from your wicked tricks? and will you make your only son your victim? Helen too laughed; she blushed, she fluttered, and was agitated. She was as happy as she could be—a good tender, matchmaking woman, the dearest project of whose heart was about to be accomplished.

So, after exchanging some knowing looks and hasty words, Helen left Arthur; and this young hero, rising from his bed, proceeded to decorate his beautiful person, and shave his ambrosial chin; and in half-an-hour he issued out from his apartment into the garden in quest of Laura. His reflections as he made his toilette were rather dismal. "I am going to tie myself for life," he thought, "to please my mother. Laura is the best of women, and—and she has given me her money. I wish to Heaven I had not received it; I wish I had not this duty to perform just yet. But as both the women have set their hearts on the match, why I suppose I must satisfy them—and now for it. A man may do worse than make happy two of the best creatures in the world." So Pen, now he was actually come to the point, felt very grave, and by no means elated, and, indeed, thought it was a great sacrifice he was going to perform.

It was Miss Laura's custom, upon her garden excursions, to wear a sort of uniform, which, though homely, was thought by many people to be not unbecoming. She had a large straw hat, with a streamer of broad ribbon, which was useless probably, but the hat sufficiently protected the owner's pretty face from the sun. Over her accustomed gown she wore a blouse or pinafore, which, being fastened round her little waist by a smart belt, looked extremely well, and her hands were guaranteed from the thorns of her favourite rose-bushes by a pair of gauntlets, which gave this young lady a military and resolute air.

Somehow she had the very same smile with which she had laughed at him on the night previous, and the recollection of his disaster again

offended Pen. But Laura, though she saw him coming down the walk looking so gloomy and full of care, accorded to him a smile of the most perfect and provoking good-humour, and went to meet him, holding one of the gauntlets to him, so that he might shake it if he liked—and Mr. Pen condescended to do so. His face, however, did not lose its tragic expression in consequence of this favour, and he continued to regard her with a dismal and solemn air.

"Excuse my glove," said Laura, with a laugh, pressing Pen's hand kindly with it. "We are not angry again, are we, Pen?"

"Why do you laugh at me?" said Pen. "You did the other night, and made a fool of me to the people at Baymouth."

"My dear Arthur, I meant you no wrong," the girl answered. "You and Miss Roundle looked so droll as you—as you met with your little accident, that I could not make a tragedy of it. Dear Pen, it wasn't a serious fall. And, besides, it was Miss Roundle who was the most unfortunate."

"Confound Miss Roundle!" bellowed out Pen.

"I'm sure she looked so," said Laura, archly. "You were up in an instant; but that poor lady sitting on the ground in her red crape dress, and looking about her with that piteous face—can I ever forget her?"—and Laura began to make a face in imitation of Miss Roundle's under the disaster, but she checked herself repentantly, saying, "Well, we must not laugh at her, but I am sure we ought to laugh at you, Pen, if you were angry about such a trifle."

"*You* should not laugh at me, Laura," said Pen, with some bitterness; "not you, of all people."

"And why not? Are you such a great man?" asked Laura.

"Ah no, Laura, I'm such a poor one," Pen answered. "Haven't you baited me enough already?"

"My dear Pen, and how?" cried Laura. "Indeed, indeed, I didn't think to vex you by such a trifle. I thought such a clever man as you could bear a harmless little joke from his sister," she said, holding her hand out again. "Dear Arthur, if I have hurt you, I beg your pardon."

"It is your kindness that humiliates me more even than your laughter, Laura," Pen said. "You are always my superior."

"What! superior to the great Arthur Pendennis? How can it be possible?" said Miss Laura, who may have had a little wickedness as well as a great deal of kindness in her composition. "You can't mean that any woman is your equal?"

"Those who confer benefits should not sneer," said Pen. "I don't

like my benefactor to laugh at me, Laura; it makes the obligation very hard to bear. You scorn me because I have taken your money,

and I am worthy to be scorned; but the blow is hard coming from you."

"Money! Obligation! For shame, Pen; this is ungenerous," Laura said, flushing red. "May not our mother claim everything that belongs to us? Don't I owe her all my happiness in this world, Arthur? What matters about a few paltry guineas, if we can set her tender heart at rest, and ease her mind regarding you? I would dig in the fields, I would go out and be a servant—I would die for her.

You know I would," said Miss Laura, kindling up; "and you call this paltry money an obligation? Oh, Pen, it's cruel—it's unworthy of you to take it so! If my brother may not share with me my superfluity, who may?—Mine?—I tell you it was not mine; it was all mamma's to do with as she chose, and so is everything I have," said Laura; "my life is hers." And the enthusiastic girl looked towards the windows of the widow's room, and blessed in her heart the kind creature within.

Helen was looking, unseen, out of that window towards which Laura's eyes and heart were turned as she spoke, and was watching her two children with the deepest interest and emotion, longing and hoping that the prayer of her life might be fulfilled; and if Laura had spoken as Helen hoped, who knows what temptations Arthur Pendennis might have been spared, or what different trials he would have had to undergo? He might have remained at Fairoaks all his days, and died a country gentleman. But would he have escaped then? Temptation is an obsequious servant that has no objection to the country, and we know that it takes up its lodging in hermitages as well as in cities; and that in the most remote and inaccessible desert it keeps company with the fugitive solitary.

"*Is* your life my mother's," said Pen, beginning to tremble, and speak in a very agitated manner. "You know, Laura, what the great object of hers is?" And he took her hand once more.

"What, Arthur?" she said, dropping it, and looking at him, at the window again, and then dropping her eyes to the ground, so that they avoided Pen's gaze. She, too, trembled, for she felt that the crisis for which she had been secretly preparing was come.

"Our mother has one wish above all others in the world, Laura," Pen said, "and I think you know it. I own to you that she has spoken to me of it; and if you will fulfil it, dear sister, I am ready. I am but very young as yet; but I have had so many pains and disappointments, that I am old and weary. I think I have hardly got a heart to offer. Before I have almost begun the race in life, I am a tired man. My career has been a failure; I have been protected by those whom I by right should have protected. I own that your nobleness and generosity, dear Laura, shame me, whilst they render me grateful. When I heard from our mother what you had done for me: that it was you who armed me and bade me go out for one struggle more; I longed to go and throw myself at your feet, and say, 'Laura, will you come and share the contest with me? Your sympathy will cheer me while it lasts. I shall have one of the tenderest and most

generous creatures under heaven to aid and bear me company.' Will you take me, dear Laura, and make our mother happy?"

"Do you think mamma would be happy if you were otherwise, Arthur?" Laura said in a low sad voice.

"And why should I not be," asked Pen eagerly, "with so dear a creature as you by my side? I have not my first love to give you: I am a broken man. But indeed I would love you fondly and truly. I have lost many an illusion and ambition, but I am not without hope still. Talents I know I have, wretchedly as I have misapplied them: they may serve me yet: they would, had I a motive for action. Let me go away and think that I am pledged to return to you. Let me go and work, and hope that you will share my success if I gain it. You have given me so much, dear Laura, will you take from me nothing?"

"What have you got to give, Arthur?" Laura said with a grave sadness of tone, which made Pen start, and see that his words had committed him. Indeed, his declaration had not been such as he would have made it two days earlier, when, full of hope and gratitude, he had run over to Laura, his liberatress, to thank her for his recovered freedom. Had he been permitted to speak then, he had spoken, and she, perhaps, had listened differently. It would have been a grateful heart asking for hers; not a weary one offered to her, to take or to leave. Laura was offended with the terms in which Pen offered himself to her. He had, in fact, said that he had no love, and yet would take no denial. "I give myself to you to please my mother," he had said: "take me, as she wishes that I should make this sacrifice." The girl's spirit would brook a husband under no such conditions: she was not minded to run forward because Pen chose to hold out the handkerchief, and her tone, in reply to Arthur, showed her determination to be independent.

"No, Arthur," she said, "our marriage would not make mamma happy, as she fancies; for it would not content you very long. I, too, have known what her wishes were; for she is too open to conceal anything she has at heart: and once, perhaps, I thought—but that is over now—that I could have made you—that it might have been as she wished."

"You have seen somebody else," said Pen, angry at her tone, and recalling the incidents of the past days.

"That allusion might have been spared," Laura replied, flinging up her head. "A heart which has worn out love at three-and-twenty, as yours has, you say, should have survived jealousy too. I do not con-

descend to say whether I have seen or encouraged any other person. I shall neither admit the charge, nor deny it: and beg you also to allude to it no more."

"I ask your pardon, Laura, if I have offended you: but if I am jealous, does it not prove that I have a heart?"

"Not for me, Arthur. Perhaps you think you love me now: but it is only for an instant, and because you are foiled. Were there no obstacle, you would feel no ardour to overcome it. No, Arthur, you don't love me. You would weary of me in three months, as—as you do of most things; and mamma, seeing you tired of me, would be more unhappy than at my refusal to be yours. Let us be brother and sister, Arthur, as heretofore—but no more. You will get over this little disappointment."

"I will try," said Arthur, in a great indignation.

"Have you not tried before?" Laura said, with some anger, for she had been angry with Arthur for a very long time, and was now determined, I suppose, to speak her mind. "And the next time, Arthur, when you offer yourself to a woman, do not say as you have done to me, 'I have no heart—I do not love you; but I am ready to marry you because my mother wishes for the match.' We require more than this in return for our love—that is, I think so. I have had no experience hitherto, and have not had the—the practice which you supposed me to have, when you spoke but now of my having seen somebody else. Did you tell your first love that you had no heart, Arthur? or your second that you did not love her, but that she might have you if she liked?"

"What—what do you mean?" asked Arthur, blushing, and still in great wrath.

"I mean Blanche Amory, Arthur Pendennis," Laura said, proudly. "It is but two months since you were sighing at her feet—making poems to her—placing them in hollow trees by the river-side. I knew all. I watched you—that is, she showed them to me. Neither one nor the other were in earnest perhaps; but it is too soon now, Arthur, to begin a new attachment. Go through the time of your—your widowhood at least, and do not think of marrying until you are out of mourning."—(Here the girl's eyes filled with tears, and she passed her hand across them.) "I am angry and hurt, and I have no right to be so, and I ask your pardon in my turn now, dear Arthur. You had a right to love Blanche. She was a thousand times prettier and more accomplished than—than any girl near us here; and you could not know that she had no heart; and so you were right to leave her too.

I ought not to rebuke you about Blanche Amory, and because she deceived you. Pardon me, Pen,"—and she held the kind hand out to Pen once more.

"We were both jealous," said Pen. "Dear Laura, let us both forgive"—and he seized her hand and would have drawn her towards him. He thought that she was relenting, and already assumed the airs of a victor.

But she shrank back, and her tears passed away; and she fixed on him a look so melancholy and severe, that the young man in his turn shrank before it. "Do not mistake me, Arthur," she said, "it cannot be. You do not know what you ask, and do not be too angry with me for saying that I think you do not deserve it. What do you offer in exchange to a woman for her love, honour, and obedience? If ever I say these words, dear Pen, I hope to say them in earnest, and by the blessing of God to keep my vow. But you—what tie binds you? You do not care about many things which we poor women hold sacred. I do not like to think or ask how far your incredulity leads you. You offer to marry to please our mother, and own that you have no heart to give away. Oh, Arthur, what is it you offer me? What a rash compact would you enter into so lightly? A month ago, and you would have given yourself to another. I pray you do not trifle with your own or others' hearts so recklessly. Go and work; go and mend, dear Arthur, for I see your faults, and dare speak of them now: go and get fame, as you say that you can, and I will pray for my brother, and watch our dearest mother at home."

"Is that your final decision, Laura?" Arthur cried.

"Yes," said Laura, bowing her head; and once more giving him her hand, she went away. He saw her pass under the creepers of the little porch, and disappear into the house. The curtains of his mother's window fell at the same minute, but he did not mark that, or suspect that Helen had been witnessing the scene.

Was he pleased, or was he angry at its termination? He had asked her, and a secret triumph filled his heart to think that he was still free. She had refused him, but did she not love him? That avowal of jealousy made him still think that her heart was his own, whatever her lips might utter.

And now we ought, perhaps, to describe another scene which took place at Fairoaks, between the widow and Laura, when the latter had to tell Helen that she had refused Arthur Pendennis. Perhaps it was the hardest task of all which Laura had to go through in this matter:

and the one which gave her the most pain. But as we do not like to see a good woman unjust, we shall not say a word more of the quarrel which now befel between Helen and her adopted daughter, or of the bitter tears which the poor girl was made to shed. It was the only difference which she and the widow had ever had as yet, and the more cruel from this cause. Pen left home whilst it was as yet pending—and Helen, who could pardon almost everything, could not pardon an act of justice in Laura.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BABYLON.

UR reader must now please to quit the woods and seashore of the west, and the gossip of Clavering, and the humdrum life of poor little Fairoaks, and transport himself with Arthur Pendennis, on the "Alacrity" coach, to London, whither he goes once for all to face the world and to make his fortune. As the coach whirls through the night away from the friendly gates of home, many a plan does the young man cast in his mind of future life and conduct, prudence, and peradventure success and fame. He knows he is a better man than many who have hitherto been ahead of him in the race: his first failure has caused him remorse, and brought with it reflection; it has not taken away his courage, or, let us add, his good opinion of himself. A hundred eager fancies and busy hopes keep him awake. How much older his mishaps and a year's thought and self-communion have made him, than when, twelve months since, he passed on this road on his way to and from Oxbridge! His thoughts turn in the night with inexpressible fondness and tenderness towards the fond mother, who blessed him when parting, and who, in spite of all his past faults and follies, trusts him and loves him still. Blessings

be on her ! he prays, as he looks up to the stars overhead. O Heaven, give him strength to work, to endure, to be honest, to avoid temptation, to be worthy of the loving soul who loves him so entirely ! Very likely she is awake too, at that moment, and sending up to the same Father purer prayers than his for the welfare of her boy. That woman's love is a talisman by which he holds and hopes to get his safety. And Laura's—he would have fain carried her affection with him too, but she has denied it, as he is not worthy of it. He owns as much with shame and remorse ; confesses how much better and loftier her nature is than his own—confesses it, and yet is glad to be free. "I am not good enough for such a creature," he owns to himself. He draws back before her spotless beauty and innocence, as from something that scares him. He feels he is not fit for such a mate as that ; as many a wild prodigal who has been pious and guiltless in early days, keeps away from a church which he used to frequent once —shunning it, but not hostile to it—only feeling that he has no right in that pure place.

With these thoughts to occupy him, Pen did not fall asleep until the nipping dawn of an October morning, and woke considerably refreshed when the coach stopped at the old breakfasting place at B——, where he had had a score of merry meals on his way to and from school and college many times since he was a boy. As they left that place, the sun broke out brightly, the pace was rapid, the horn blew, the milestones flew by, Pen smoked and joked with guard and fellow-passengers and people along the familiar road; it grew more busy and animated at every instant ; the last team of greys came out at H——, and the coach drove into London. What young fellow has not felt a thrill as he entered the vast place? Hundreds of other carriages, crowded with their thousands of men, were hastening to the great city. "Here is my place," thought Pen ; "here is my battle beginning, in which I must fight and conquer, or fall. I have been a boy and a dawdler as yet. Oh, I long, I long to show that I can be a man." And from his place on the coach-roof the eager young fellow looked down upon the city, with the sort of longing desire which young soldiers feel on the eve of a campaign.

As they came along the road, Pen had formed acquaintance with a cheery fellow-passenger in a shabby cloak, who talked a great deal about men of letters with whom he was very familiar, and who was, in fact, the reporter of a London newspaper, as whose representative he had been to attend a great wrestling-match in the west. This gentleman knew intimately, as it appeared, all the leading men of

letters of his day, and talked about Tom Campbell, and Tom Hood, and Sydney Smith, and this and the other, as if he had been their most intimate friend. As they passed by Brompton, this gentleman pointed out to Pen Mr. Hurtle, the reviewer, walking with his umbrella. Pen craned over the coach to have a long look at the great Hurtle. He was a Boniface man, said Pen. And Mr. Doolan, of the "Tom and Jerry" newspaper (for such was the gentleman's name and address upon the card which he handed to Pen), said "Faith he was, and he knew him very well." Pen thought it was quite an honour to have seen the great Mr. Hurtle, whose works he admired. He believed fondly, as yet, in authors, reviewers, and editors of newspapers. Even Wagg, whose books did not appear to him to be masterpieces of human intellect, he yet secretly revered as a successful writer. He mentioned that he had met Wagg in the country, and Doolan told him how that famous novelist received three hundther pounds a volume for every one of his novels. Pen began to calculate instantly whether he might not make five thousand a year.

The very first acquaintance of his own whom Arthur met, as the coach pulled up at the Gloster Coffee House, was his old friend Harry Foker, who came prancing down Arlington Street behind an enormous cab-horse. He had white kid gloves and white reins, and nature had by this time decorated him with a considerable tuft on the chin. A very small cab-boy, vice Stoopid retired, swung on behind Foker's vehicle; knock-kneed and in the tightest leather breeches. Foker looked at the dusty coach, and the smoking horses of the "Alacrity" by which he had made journeys in former times.—"What, Foker!" cried out Pendennis—"Hullo! Pen, my boy!" said the other, and he waved his whip by way of amity and salute to Arthur, who was very glad to see his queer friend's kind old face. Mr. Doolan had a great respect for Pen who had an acquaintance in such a grand cab; and Pen was greatly excited and pleased to be at liberty and in London. He asked Doolan to come and dine with him at the Covent Garden Coffee House, where he put up: he called a cab and rattled away thither in the highest spirits. He was glad to see the bustling waiter and polite bowing landlord again; and asked for the landlady, and missed the old Boots, and would have liked to shake hands with everybody. He had a hundred pounds in his pocket. He dressed himself in his very best; dined in the coffee-room with a modest pint of sherry (for he was determined to be very economical), and went to the theatre adjoining.

The lights and the music, the crowd and the gaiety, charmed and exhilarated Pen, as those sights will do young fellows from college and the country, to whom they are tolerably new. He laughed at the jokes; he applauded the songs to the delight of some of the dreary old *habitués* of the boxes, who had ceased long ago to find the least excitement in their place of nightly resort, and were pleased to see any one so fresh, and so much amused. At the end of the first piece, he went and strutted about the lobbies of the theatre, as if he was in a resort of the highest fashion. What tired frequenter of the London pavé is there that cannot remember having had similar early delusions, and would not call them back again? Here was young Foker again, like an ardent votary of pleasure as he was. He was walking with Granby Tiptoff, of the Household Brigade, Lord Tiptoff's brother, and Lord Colchicum, Captain Tiptoff's uncle, a venerable peer, who had been a man of pleasure since the first French Revolution. Foker rushed upon Pen with eagerness, and insisted that the latter should come into his private box, where a lady with the longest ringlets, and the fairest shoulders, was seated. This was Miss Blenkinsop, the eminent actress of high comedy; and in the back of the box snoozing in a wig, sate old Blenkinsop, her papa. He was described in the theatrical prints as the "veteran Blenkinsop"—"the useful Blenkinsop"—"that old favourite of the public, Blenkinsop:" those parts in the drama, which are called the heavy fathers, were usually assigned to this veteran, who, indeed, acted the heavy father in public, as in private life.

At this time, it being about eleven o'clock, Mrs. Pendennis was gone to bed at Fairoaks, and wondering whether her dearest Arthur was at rest after his journey. At this time Laura, too, was awake. And at this time yesterday night, as the coach rolled over silent commons, where cottage windows twinkled, and by darkling woods under calm starlit skies, Pen was vowing to reform and to resist temptation, and his heart was at home. . . . . Meanwhile the farce was going on very successfully, and Mrs. Leary, in a hussar jacket and braided pantaloons, was enchanting the audience with her archness, her lovely figure, and her delightful ballads.

Pen, being new to the town, would have liked to listen to Mrs. Leary; but the other people in the box did not care about her song or her pantaloons, and kept up an incessant chattering. Tiptoff knew where her *maillots* came from. Colchicum saw her when she came out in '14. Miss Blenkinsop said she sang out of all tune, to the pain and astonishment of Pen, who thought that she was as beautiful as an

angel, and that she sang like a nightingale; and when Hoppus came on as Sir Harcourt Featherby, the young man of the piece, the gentlemen in the box declared that Hoppus was getting too stale, and Tiptoff was for flinging Miss Blenkinsop's bouquet to him.

"Not for the world," cried the daughter of the veteran Blenkinsop; "Lord Colchicum gave it to me."

Pen remembered that nobleman's name, and with a bow and a blush said he believed he had to thank Lord Colchicum for having proposed him at the Polyanthus Club, at the request of his uncle Major Pendennis.

"What, you're Wigsby's nephew, are you?" said the peer. "I beg your pardon, we always call him Wigsby." Pen blushed to hear his venerable uncle called by such a familiar name. "We balloted you in last week, didn't we? Yes, last Wednesday night. Your uncle wasn't there."

Here was delightful news for Pen! He professed himself very much obliged indeed to Lord Colchicum, and made him a handsome speech of thanks, to which the other listened, with his double opera-glass up to his eyes. Pen was full of excitement at the idea of being a member of this polite Club.

"Don't be always looking at that box, you naughty creature," cried Miss Blenkinsop.

"She's a dev'lish fine woman, that Mirabel," said Tiptoff; "though Mirabel was a d—d fool to marry her."

"A stupid old spooney," said the peer.

"Mirabel!" cried out Pendennis.

"Ha! ha!" laughed out Harry Foker. "We've heard of her before, haven't we, Pen?"

It was Pen's first love. It was Miss Fotheringay. The year before she had been led to the altar by Sir Charles Mirabel, G.C.B., and formerly envoy to the Court of Pumpernickel, who had taken so active a part in the negotiations before the Congress of Swammmerdan, and signed, on behalf of H. B. M., the Peace of Pultusk.

"Emily was always as stupid as an owl," said Miss Blenkinsop.

"Eh! eh! pas si bête," the old peer said.

"Oh, for shame!" cried the actress, who did not in the least know what he meant.

And Pen looked out and beheld his first love once again—and wondered how he ever could have loved her.

Thus, on the very first night of his arrival in London, Mr. Arthur

Pendennis found himself introduced to a Club, to an actress of genteel comedy and a heavy father of the Stage, and to a dashing society of jovial blades, old and young; for my Lord Colchicum, though stricken in years, bald of head and enfeebled in person, was still indefatigable in the pursuit of enjoyment, and it was the venerable Viscount's boast that he could drink as much claret as the youngest member of the society which he frequented. He lived with the youth about town: he gave them countless dinners at Richmond and Greenwich: an enlightened patron of the drama in all languages and of the Terpsichorean art, he received dramatic professors of all nations at his banquets —English from the Covent Garden and Strand houses, Italians from the Haymarket, French from their own pretty little theatre, or the boards of the Opera where they danced. And at his villa on the Thames, this pillar of the State gave sumptuous entertainments to scores of young men of fashion, who very affably consorted with the ladies and gentlemen of the green-room—with the former chiefly, for Viscount Colchicum preferred their society as more polished and gay than that of their male brethren.

Pen went the next day and paid his entrance money at the Club, which operation carried off exactly one-third of his hundred pounds: and took possession of the edifice, and ate his luncheon there with immense satisfaction. He plunged into an easy chair in the library, and tried to read all the magazines. He wondered whether the members were looking at him, and that they could dare to keep on their hats in such fine rooms. He sate down and wrote a letter to Fairoaks on the Club paper, and said, what a comfort this place would be to him after his day's work was over. He went over to his uncle's lodgings in Bury Street with some considerable tremor, and in compliance with his mother's earnest desire, that he should instantly call on Major Pendennis; and was not a little relieved to find that the Major had not yet returned to town. His apartments were blank. Brown Hollands covered his library-table, and bills and letters lay on the mantel-piece, grimly awaiting the return of their owner. The Major was on the continent, the landlady of the house said, at Badn-Badn, with the Marcus of Steyne. Pen left his card upon the shelf with the rest. Fairoaks was written on it still. When the Major returned to London, which he did in time for the fogs of November, after enjoying which he proposed to spend Christmas with some friends in the country, he found another card of Arthur's, on which Lamb Court, Temple, was engraved, and a note from that young gentleman and from his mother, stating that he was come to town,

was entered a member of the Upper Temple, and was reading hard for the bar.

Lamb Court, Temple :—where was it? Major Pendennis remembered that some ladies of fashion used to talk of dining with Mr. Ayliffe, the barrister, who was in "society," and who lived there in the King's Bench, of which prison there was probably a branch in the Temple, and Ayliffe was very likely an officer. Mr. Deuceace, Lord Crab's son, had also lived there, he recollected. He dispatched Morgan to find out where Lamb Court was, and to report upon the lodging selected by Mr. Arthur. That alert messenger had little difficulty in discovering Mr. Pen's abode. Discreet Morgan had in his time traced people far more difficult to find than Arthur.

"What sort of a place is it, Morgan?" asked the Major out of the bed-curtains in Bury Street the next morning, as the valet was arranging his toilette in the deep yellow London fog.

"I should say raythe a shy place," said Mr. Morgan. "The lawyers lives there, and has their names on the doors. Mr. Harthur lives three pair high, sir. Mr. Warrington lives there too, sir."

"Suffolk Warringtons! I shouldn't wonder: a good family," thought the Major. "The cadets of many of our good families follow the robe as a profession. Comfortable rooms, eh?"

"Honly saw the outside of the door, sir, with Mr. Warrington's name and Mr. Arthur's painted up, and a piece of paper with 'Back at 6;' but I couldn't see no servant, sir."

"Economical at any rate," said the Major.

"Very, sir. Three pair, sir. Nasty black staircase as ever I see. Wonder how a gentleman can live in such a place."

"Pray, who taught you where gentlemen should or should not live, Morgan? Mr. Arthur, sir, is going to study for the bar, sir;" the Major said with much dignity; and closed the conversation and began to array himself in the yellow fog.

"Boys will be boys," the mollified uncle thought to himself. "He has written to me a devilish good letter. Colchicum says he has had him to dine, and thinks him a gentlemanlike lad. His mother is one of the best creatures in the world. If he has sown his wild oats, and will stick to his business, he may do well yet. Think of Charley Mirabel, the old fool, marrying that flame of his; that Fotheringay! He doesn't like to come here till I give him leave, and puts it in a very manly nice way. I was deuced angry with him, after his Oxbridge escapades—and showed it, too, when he was here before—Gad, I'll go and see him, hang me, if I don't."

And having ascertained from Morgan that he could reach the Temple without much difficulty, and that a city omnibus would put him down at the gate, the Major one day after breakfast at his Club —not the Polyanthus, whereof Mr. Pen was just elected a member, but another Club : for the Major was too wise to have a nephew as a constant inmate of any house where he was in the habit of passing his time—the Major one day entered one of those public vehicles, and bade the conductor to put him down at the gate of the Upper Temple.

When Major Pendennis reached that dingy portal it was about twelve o'clock in the day ; and he was directed by a civil personage with a badge and a white apron, through some dark alleys, and under various melancholy archways into courts each more dismal than the other, until finally he reached Lamb Court. If it was dark in Pall Mall, what was it in Lamb Court. Candles were burning in many of the rooms there—in the pupil-room of Mr. Hodgeman, the special pleader, whose six pupils were scribbling declarations under the tallow ; in Sir Hokey Walker's clerk's room, where the clerk, a person far more gentlemanlike and cheerful in appearance than the celebrated counsel, his master, was conversing in a patronising manner with the managing clerk of an attorney at the door ; and in Curling, the wig-maker's melancholy shop, where, from behind the feeble glimmer of a couple of lights, large serjeants' and judges' wigs were looming drearily, with the blank blocks looking at the lamp-post in the court. Two little clerks were playing at toss-halfpenny under that lamp. A laundress in pattens passed in at one door, a newspaper boy issued from another. A porter, whose white apron was faintly visible, paced up and down. It would be impossible to conceive a place more dismal, and the Major shuddered to think that any one should select such a residence. "Good Ged!" he said, "the poor boy mustn't live on here."

The feeble and filthy oil-lamps, with which the staircases of the Upper Temple are lighted of nights, were of course not illuminating the stairs by day, and Major Pendennis, having read with difficulty his nephew's name under Mr. Warrington's on the wall of No. 6, found still greater difficulty in climbing the abominable black stairs, up the banisters of which, which contributed their damp exudations to his gloves, he groped painfully until he came to the third story. A candle was in the passage of one of the two sets of rooms ; the doors were open, and the names of Mr. Warrington and Mr. A. Pendennis were very clearly visible to the Major as he went in. An Irish charwoman, with a pail and broom, opened the door for the Major.

"Is that the beer?" cried out a great voice: "give us hold of it."

The gentleman who was speaking was seated on a table, unshorn and smoking a short pipe; in a farther chair sate Pen, with a cigar, and his legs near the fire. A little boy, who acted as the clerk of these gentlemen, was grinning in the Major's face, at the idea of his being mistaken for beer. Here, upon the third floor, the rooms were somewhat lighter, and the Major could see the place.

"Pen, my boy, it's I—it's your uncle," he said, choking with the smoke. But as most young men of fashion used the weed, he pardoned the practice easily enough.

Mr. Warrington got up from the table, and Pen, in a very perturbed manner, from his chair. "Beg your pardon for mistaking you," said Warrington, in a frank, loud voice. "Will you take a cigar, sir? Clear those things off the chair, Pidgeon, and pull it round to the fire."

Pen flung his cigar into the grate; and was pleased with the cordiality with which his uncle shook him by the hand. As soon as he could speak for the stairs and the smoke, the Major began to ask Pen very kindly about himself and about his mother; for blood is blood, and he was pleased once more to see the boy.

Pen gave his news, and then introduced Mr. Warrington—an old Boniface man—whose chambers he shared.

The Major was quite satisfied when he heard that Mr. Warrington was a younger son of Sir Miles Warrington of Suffolk. He had served with an uncle of his in India and in New South Wales, years ago.

"Took a sheep-farm there, sir, made a fortune—better thing than law or soldiering," Warrington said. "Think I shall go there, too." And here, the expected beer coming in, in a tankard with a glass bottom, Mr. Warrington, with a laugh, said he supposed the Major would not have any, and took a long, deep draught himself, after which he wiped his wrist across his beard with great satisfaction. The young man was perfectly easy and unembarrassed. He was dressed in a ragged old shooting-jacket, and had a bristly blue beard. He was drinking beer like a coal-heaver, and yet you couldn't but perceive that he was a gentleman.

When he had sate for a minute or two after his draught he went out of the room, leaving it to Pen and his uncle, that they might talk over family affairs were they so inclined.

"Rough and ready, your chum seems," the Major said. "Somewhat different from your dandy friends at Oxbridge."

"Times are altered," Arthur replied, with a blush. "Warrington is only just called, and has no business, but he knows law pretty well; and until I can afford to read with a pleader, I use his books and get his help."

"Is that one of the books?" the Major asked, with a smile. A French novel was lying at the foot of Pen's chair.

"This is not a working day, sir," the lad said. "We were out very late at a party last night—at Lady Whiston's," Pen added, knowing his uncle's weakness. "Everybody in town was there except you, sir; Counts, Ambassadors, Turks, Stars and Garters—I don't know who—it's all in the paper—and my name, too," said Pen, with great glee. "I met an old flame of mine there, sir," he added, with a laugh. "You know whom I mean, sir,—Lady Mirabel—to whom I was introduced over again. She shook hands, and was gracious enough. I may thank you for being out of that scrape, sir. She presented me to the husband, too—an old beau in a star and a blonde wig. He does not seem very wise. She has asked me to call on her, sir: and I may go now without any fear of losing my heart."

"What, we have had some new loves, have we?" the Major asked, in high good-humour.

"Some two or three," Mr. Pen said, laughing. "But I don't put on my *grand sérieux* any more, sir. That goes off after the first flame."

"Very right, my dear boy. Flames and darts and passion, and that sort of thing, do very well for a lad: and you were but a lad when that affair with the Fotheringill—Fotheringay—(what's her name?) came off. But a man of the world gives up those follies. You still may do very well. You have been hit, but you may recover. You are heir to a little independence, which everybody fancies is a doosid deal more. You have a good name, good wits, good manners, and a good person—and, begad! I don't see why you shouldn't marry a woman with money—get into Parliament—distinguish yourself, and —and, in fact, that sort of thing. Remember, it's as easy to marry a rich woman as a poor woman: and a devilish deal pleasanter to sit down to a good dinner than to a scrag of mutton in lodgings. Make up your mind to that. A woman with a good jointure is a doosid deal easier a profession than the law, let me tell you. Look out; *I* shall be on the watch for you: and I shall die content, my boy, if I can see you with a good lady-like wife, and a good carriage, and a good pair of horses, living in society, and seeing your friends, like a

gentleman." It was thus this affectionate uncle spoke, and expounded to Pen his simple philosophy.

"What would my mother and Laura say to this, I wonder?" thought the lad. Indeed, old Pendennis's morals were not their morals, nor was his wisdom theirs.

This affecting conversation between uncle and nephew had scarcely concluded, when Warrington came out of his bed-room, no longer in rags, but dressed like a gentleman, straight and tall, and perfectly frank and good-humoured. He did the honours of his ragged sitting-room with as much ease as if it had been the finest apartment in London. And queer rooms they were in which the Major found his nephew. The carpet was full of holes—the table stained with many circles of Warrington's previous ale-pots. There was a small library of law-books, books of poetry, and of mathematics, of which he was very fond. He had been one of the hardest livers and hardest readers of his time at Oxbridge, where the name of Stunning Warrington was yet famous for beating bargemen, pulling matches, winning prizes, and drinking milk-punch. A print of the old college hung up over the mantel-piece, and some battered volumes of Plato, bearing its well-known arms, were on the book-shelves. There were two easy-chairs; a standing reading-desk piled with bills; a couple of very meagre briefs on a broken-legged study-table. Indeed, there was scarcely any article of furniture that had not been in the wars, and was not wounded. "Look here, sir, here is Pen's room. He is a dandy, and has got curtains to his bed, and wears shiny boots, and has a silver dressing-case." Indeed, Pen's room was rather coquettishly arranged, and a couple of neat prints of opera-dancers, besides a drawing of Fairoaks, hung on the walls. In Warrington's room there was scarcely any article of furniture, save a great shower-bath, and a heap of books by the bedside; where he lay upon straw like Margery Daw, and smoked his pipe, and read half through the night his favourite poetry or mathematics.

When he had completed his simple toilette, Mr. Warrington came out of this room, and proceeded to the cupboard to search for his breakfast.

"Might I offer you a mutton-chop, sir? We cook 'em ourselves, hot and hot; and I am teaching Pen the first principles of law, cooking, and morality at the same time. He's a lazy beggar, sir, and too much of a dandy."

And so saying Mr. Warrington wiped a gridiron with a piece of paper, put it on the fire, and on it two mutton chops, and took from

the cupboard a couple of plates, and some knives and silver forks, and castors.

"Say but a word, Major Pendennis," he said; "there's another chop in the cupboard, or Pidgeon shall go out and get you anything you like."

Major Pendennis sate in wonder and amusement, but he said he had just breakfasted, and wouldn't have any lunch. So Warrington cooked the chops, and popped them hissing hot upon the plates.

Pen fell to at his chop with a good appetite, after looking up at his uncle, and seeing that gentleman was still in good-humour.

"You see, sir," Warrington said, "Mrs. Flanaghan isn't here to do 'em, and we can't employ the boy, for the little beggar is all day occupied cleaning Pen's boots. And now for another swig at the beer. Pen drinks tea; it's only fit for old women."

"And so you were at Lady Whiston's last night," the Major said, not in truth knowing what observation to make to this rough diamond.

"I at Lady Whiston's! not such a flat, sir. I don't care for female society. In fact it bores me. I spent my evening philosophically at the Back Kitchen."

"The Back Kitchen? indeed!" said the Major.

"I see you don't know what it means," Warrington said. "Ask Pen. He was there after Lady Whiston's. Tell Major Pendennis about the Back Kitchen, Pen—don't be ashamed of yourself."

So Pen said it was a little eccentric society of men of letters and men about town, to which he had been presented; and the Major began to think that the young fellow had seen a good deal of the world since his arrival in London.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE TEMPLE.

COLLEGES, schools, and inns of court, still have some respect for antiquity, and maintain a great number of the customs and institutions of our ancestors, with which those persons who do not particularly regard their forefathers, or perhaps are not very well acquainted with them, have long since done away. A well-ordained workhouse or prison is much better provided with the appliances of health, comfort, and cleanliness, than a respectable Foundation School, a venerable College, or a learned Inn. In the latter place of residence men are contented to sleep in dingy closets, and to pay for the sitting-room and the cupboard, which is their dormitory, the price of a good villa and garden in the suburbs, or of a roomy house in the neglected squares of the town. The poorest mechanic in Spitalfields has a cistern and an unbounded supply of water at his command; but the gentlemen of the inns of court, and

the gentlemen of the universities, have their supply of this cosmetic fetched in jugs by laundresses and bedmakers, and live in abodes which were erected long before the custom of cleanliness and decency obtained among us. There are individuals still alive who sneer at the people, and speak of them with epithets of scorn. Gentlemen, there can be but little doubt that your ancestors were the Great Unwashed: and in the Temple especially, it is pretty certain, that only under the greatest difficulties and restrictions, the virtue which has been pronounced to be next to godliness could have been practised at all.

Old Grump, of the Norfolk Circuit, who had lived for more than thirty years in the chambers under those occupied by Warrington and Pendennis, and who used to be awakened by the roaring of the shower-baths which those gentlemen had erected in their apartments,—part of the contents of which occasionally trickled through the roof into Mr. Grump's room,—declared that the practice was an absurd, new-fangled, dandyfied folly, and daily cursed the laundress who slopped the staircase by which he had to pass. Grump, now much more than half a century old, had indeed never used the luxury in question. He had done without water very well, and so had our fathers before him. Of all those knights and baronets, lords and gentlemen, bearing arms, whose escutcheons are painted upon the walls of the famous hall of the Upper Temple, was there no philanthropist good-natured enough to devise a set of Hummums for the benefit of the lawyers, his fellows and successors? The Temple historian makes no mention of such a scheme. There is Pump Court and Fountain Court, with their hydraulic apparatus, but one never heard of a bencher disporting in the fountain; and can't but think how many a counsel learned in the law of old days might have benefitted by the pump.

Nevertheless, those venerable Inns which have the Lamb and Flag and the Winged Horse for their ensigns, have attractions for persons who inhabit them, and a share of rough comforts and freedom, which men always remember with pleasure. I don't know whether the student of law permits himself the refreshment of enthusiasm or indulges in poetical reminiscences as he passes by historical chambers, and says, "Yonder Eldon lived—upon this site Coke mused upon Lyttleton—here Chitty toiled—here Barnwell and Alderson joined in their famous labours—here Byles composed his great work upon bills, and Smith compiled his immortal leading cases—here Gustavus still toils, with Solomon to aid him:" but the man of letters can't but love the place which has been inhabited by so many of his brethren, or peopled by their creations as real to us at this day as the authors

whose children they were—and Sir Roger de Coverley walking in the Temple Garden, and discoursing with Mr. Spectator about the beauties in hoops and patches who are sauntering over the grass, is just as lively a figure to me as old Samuel Johnson rolling through the fog with the Scotch gentleman at his heels on their way to Dr. Goldsmith's chambers in Brick Court; or Harry Fielding, with inked ruffles and a wet towel round his head, dashing off articles at midnight for the Covent Garden Journal, while the printer's boy is asleep in the passage.

If we could but get the history of a single day as it passed in any one of those four-storied houses in the dingy court where our friends Pen and Warrington dwelt, some Temple Asmodeus might furnish us with a queer volume. There may be a great parliamentary counsel on the ground-floor, who drives off to Belgravia at dinner-time, when his clerk, too, becomes a gentleman, and goes away to entertain his friends, and to take his pleasure. But a short time since he was hungry and briefless in some garret of the Inn; lived by stealthy literature; hoped, and waited, and sickened, and no clients came; exhausted his own means and his friends' kindness; had to remonstrate humbly with duns, and to implore the patience of poor creditors. Ruin seemed to be staring him in the face, when, behold, a turn of the wheel of fortune, and the lucky wretch in possession of one of those prodigious prizes which are sometimes drawn in the great lottery of the Bar. Many a better lawyer than himself does not make a fifth part of the income of his clerk, who, a few months since, could scarcely get credit for blacking for his master's unpaid boots. On the first-floor, perhaps, you will have a venerable man whose name is famous, who has lived for half a century in the Inn, whose brains are full of books, and whose shelves are stored with classical and legal lore. He has lived alone all these fifty years, alone and for himself, amassing learning, and compiling a fortune. He comes home now at night only from the club, where he has been dining freely, to the lonely chambers where he lives a godless old recluse. When he dies, his Inn will erect a tablet to his honour, and his heirs burn a part of his library. Would you like to have such a prospect for your old age, to store up learning and money, and end so? But we must not linger too long by Mr. Doomsday's door. Worthy Mr. Grump lives over him, who is also an ancient inhabitant of the Inn, and who, when Doomsday comes home to read Catullus, is sitting down with three steady seniors of his standing, to a steady rubber at whist, after a dinner at which they have consumed their *three* steady bottles of Port. You may see the old boys asleep at the

Temple Church of a Sunday. Attornies seldom trouble them, and they have small fortunes of their own. On the other side of the third landing, where Pen and Warrington live, till long after midnight, sits Mr. Paley, who took the highest honours, and who is a fellow of his college, who will sit and read and note cases until two o'clock in the morning; who will rise at seven and be at the pleader's chambers as soon as they are open, where he will work until an hour before dinner-time; who will come home from Hall and read and note cases again until dawn next day, when perhaps Mr. Arthur Pendennis and his friend Mr. Warrington are returning from some of their wild expeditions. How differently employed Mr. Paley has been! He has not been throwing himself away: he has only been bringing a great intellect laboriously down to the comprehension of a mean subject, and in his fierce grasp of that, resolutely excluding from his mind all higher thoughts, all better things, all the wisdom of philosophers and historians, all the thoughts of poets; all wit, fancy, reflection, art, love, truth altogether—so that he may master that enormous legend of the law, which he proposes to gain his livelihood by expounding. Warrington and Paley had been competitors for university honours in former days, and had run each other hard; and everybody said now that the former was wasting his time and energies, whilst all people praised Paley for his industry. There may be doubts, however, as to which was using his time best. The one could afford time to think, and the other never could. The one could have sympathies and do kindnesses; and the other must needs be always selfish. He could not cultivate a friendship or do a charity, or admire a work of genius, or kindle at the sight of beauty or the sound of a sweet song—he had no time, and no eyes for anything but his law-books. All was dark outside his reading-lamp. Love, and Nature, and Art, (which is the expression of our praise and sense of the beautiful world of God), were shut out from him. And as he turned off his lonely lamp at night, he never thought but that he had spent the day profitably, and went to sleep alike thankless and remorseless. But he shuddered when he met his old companion Warrington on the stairs, and shunned him as one that was doomed to perdition.

It may have been the sight of that cadaverous ambition and self-complacent meanness, which showed itself in Paley's yellow face, and twinkled in his narrow eyes, or it may have been a natural appetite for pleasure and joviality, of which it must be confessed Mr. Pen was exceedingly fond, which deterred that luckless youth from pursuing his designs upon the Bench or the Woolsack with the ardour, or rather

steadiness, which is requisite in gentlemen who would climb to those seats of honour. He enjoyed the Temple life with a great deal of relish: his worthy relatives thought he was reading as became a regular student: and his uncle wrote home congratulatory letters to the kind widow at Fairoaks, announcing that the lad had sown his wild oats, and was becoming quite steady. The truth is, that it was a new sort of excitement to Pen the life in which he was now engaged, and having given up some of the dandyfied pretensions, and fine-gentleman airs which he had contracted among his aristocratic college acquaintances, of whom he now saw but little, the rough pleasures and amusements of a London bachelor were very novel and agreeable to him, and he enjoyed them all. Time was he would have envied the dandies their fine horses in Rotten Row, but he was contented now to walk in the Park and look at them. He was too young to succeed in London society without a better name and a larger fortune than he had, and too lazy to get on without these adjuncts. Old Pendennis fondly thought he was busied with law because he neglected the social advantages presented to him, and, having been at half a dozen balls and evening parties, retreated before their dulness and sameness; and whenever anybody made enquiries of the worthy Major about his nephew, the old gentleman said the young rascal was reformed, and could not be got away from his books. But the Major would have been almost as much horrified as Mr. Paley was, had he known what was Mr. Pen's real course of life, and how much pleasure entered into his law studies.

A long morning's reading, a walk in the park, a pull on the river, a stretch up the hill to Hampstead, and a modest tavern dinner; a bachelor night passed here or there, in joviality, not vice (for Arthur Pendennis admired women so heartily that he could never bear the society of any of them that were not, in his fancy at least, good and pure); a quiet evening at home, alone with a friend and a pipe or two, and a humble potation of British spirits, whereof Mrs. Flanagan, the laundress, invariably tested the quality;—these were our young gentleman's pursuits, and it must be owned that his life was not unpleasant. In term-time, Mr. Pen showed a most praiseworthy regularity in performing one part of the law-student's course of duty, and eating his dinners in Hall. Indeed, that Hall of the Upper Temple is a sight not uninteresting, and with the exception of some trifling improvements and anachronisms which have been introduced into the practice there, a man may sit down and fancy that he joins in a meal of the seventeenth century. The bar have their messes, the students their tables

apart; the benchers sit at the high table on the raised platform, surrounded by pictures of judges of the law and portraits of royal person-

ages who have honoured its festivities with their presence and patronage. Pen looked about, on his first introduction, not a little amused with the scene which he witnessed. Among his comrades of the student class there were gentlemen of all ages, from sixty to seventeen; stout grey-headed attornies who were proceeding to take the superior dignity,—dandies and men-about-town who wished for some reason to be barristers of seven years' standing,—swarthy, black-eyed natives of the Colonies, who came to be called here before they practised in

their own islands,—and many gentlemen of the Irish nation, who make a sojourn in Middle Temple Lane before they return to the green country of their birth. There were little squads of reading students who talked law all dinner-time; there were rowing men, whose discourse was of sculling matches, the Red House, Vauxhall, and the Opera; there were others great in politics, and orators of the students' debating clubs; with all of which sets, except the first, whose talk was an almost unknown and a quite uninteresting language to him, Mr. Pen made a gradual acquaintance, and had many points of sympathy.

The ancient and liberal Inn of the Upper Temple provides in its Hall, and for a most moderate price, an excellent wholesome dinner of soup, meat, tarts, and port wine or sherry, for the barristers and students who attend that place of refection. The parties are arranged in messes of four, each of which quartets has its piece of beef or leg of mutton, its sufficient apple-pie, and its bottle of wine. But the honest habitués of the hall, amongst the lower rank of students, who have a taste for good living, have many harmless arts by which they improve their banquet, and innocent "dodges" (if we may be permitted to use an excellent phrase that has become vernacular since the appearance of the last dictionaries) by which they strive to attain for themselves more delicate food than the common every-day roast meat of the students' tables.

"Wait a bit," said Mr. Lowton, one of these Temple gourmands. "Wait a bit," said Mr. Lowton, tugging at Pen's gown—"the tables are very full, and there's only three benchers to eat ten side dishes—if we wait, perhaps we shall get something from their table." And Pen looked with some amusement, as did Mr. Lowton with eyes of fond desire, towards the benchers' high table, where three old gentlemen were standing up before a dozen silver dish-covers, while the clerk was quavering out a grace.

Lowton was great in the conduct of the dinner. His aim was to manage so as to be the first, or captain of the mess, and to secure for himself the thirteenth glass of the bottle of port wine. Thus he would have the command of the joint on which he operated his favourite cuts, and made rapid dexterous appropriations of gravy, which amused Pen infinitely. Poor Jack Lowton! thy pleasures in life were very harmless; an eager epicure, thy desires did not go beyond eighteen-pence.

Pen was somewhat older than many of his fellow-students, and there was that about his style and appearance which, as we have said,

was rather haughty and impertinent, that stamped him as a man of *ton*—very unlike those pale students who were talking law to one another, and those ferocious dandies, in rowing shirts and astonishing pins and waistcoats, who represented the idle part of the little community. The humble and good-natured Lowton had felt attracted by Pen's superior looks and presence—and had made acquaintance with him at the mess by opening the conversation.

"This is boiled beef day, I believe, sir," said Lowton to Pen.

"Upon my word, sir, I'm not aware," said Pen, hardly able to contain his laughter, but added, "I'm a stranger; this is my first term;" on which Lowton began to point out to him the notabilities in the Hall.

"That's Boosey the bencher, the bald one sitting under the picture and aving soup; I wonder whether it's turtle? They often ave turtle. Next is Balls, the King's Counsel, and Swettenham—Hodge and Swettenham, you know. That's old Grump, the senior of the bar; they say he's dined here forty years. They often send 'em down their fish from the benchers to the senior table. Do you see those four fellows seated opposite us? They are regular swells—tip-top fellows, I can tell you—Mr. Trail, the Bishop of Ealing's son, Honourable Fred. Ringwood, Lord Cinqbar's brother, you know. *He'll* have a good place, I bet any money: and Bob Suckling, who's always with him—a high fellow too. Ha! ha!" Here Lowton burst into a laugh.

"What is it?" said Pen, still amused.

"I say, I like to mess with those chaps," Lowton said, winking his eye knowingly, and pouring out his glass of wine.

"And why?" asked Pen.

"Why! they don't come down here to dine you know, they only make believe to dine. *They* dine here, Law bless you! They go to some of the swell clubs, or else to some grand dinner party. You see their names in the 'Morning Post' at all the fine parties in London. Why, I bet anything that Ringwood has his cab, or Trail his brougham (he's a devil of a fellow, and makes the bishop's money spin, I can tell you) at the corner of Essex Street at this minute. They dine! They won't dine these two hours, I dare say."

"But why should you like to mess with them, if they don't eat any dinner?" Pen asked, still puzzled. "There's plenty, isn't there?"

"How green you are," said Lowton. "Excuse me, but you *are* green. They don't drink any wine, don't you see, and a fellow gets

the bottle to himself if he likes it when he messes with those three chaps. That's why Corkoran got in with 'em."

"Ah, Mr. Lowton, I see you are a sly fellow," Pen said, delighted with his acquaintance: to which the other modestly replied, that he had lived in London the better part of his life, and of course had his eyes about him: and went on with his monologue to Pen.

"There's a lot of Irish here," he said: "that Corkoran's one, and I can't say I like him. You see that handsome chap with the blue neckcloth and pink shirt and yellow waistcoat, that's another; that's Mulloy Maloney, of Ballymaloney, and nephew to Major-General Sir Hector O'Dowd, he has," Lowton said, trying to imitate the Hibernian accent. "He's always bragging about his uncle; and came into Hall in silver-striped trousers the day he had been presented. That other near him, with the long black hair, is a tremendous rebel. By Jove, sir, to hear him at the Forum it makes your blood freeze: and the next is an Irishman, too, Jack Finucane, reporter of a newspaper. They all stick together, those Irish. It's your turn to fill your glass. What? you won't have any port? Don't like port with your dinner? Here's your health." And this worthy man found himself not the less attached to Pendennis because the latter disliked port wine at dinner.

It was while Pen was taking his share of one of these dinners with his acquaintance Lowton as the captain of his mess, that there came to join them a gentleman in a barrister's gown, who could not find a seat, as it appeared, amongst the persons of his own degree, and who strode over the table and took his place on the bench where Pen sate. He was dressed in old clothes and a faded gown, which hung behind him, and he wore a shirt which, though clean, was extremely ragged, and very different to the magnificent pink raiment of Mr. Mulloy Maloney, who occupied a commanding position in the next mess. In order to notify their appearance at dinner, it is the custom of the gentlemen who eat in the Upper Temple Hall to write down their names upon slips of paper, which are provided for that purpose, with a pencil for each mess. Lowton wrote his name first, then came Arthur Pendennis, and the next was that of the gentleman in the old clothes. He smiled when he saw Pen's name, and looked at him. "We ought to know each other," he said. "We're both Boniface men; my name's Warrington."

"Are you St—— Warrington?" Pen said, delighted to see this hero.

Warrington laughed—"Stunning Warrington—yes," he said. "I

recollect you in your freshman's term. But you appear to have quite cut me out."

"The college talks about you still," said Pen, who had a generous admiration for talent and pluck. "The bargeman you thrashed, Bill Simes, don't you remember, wants you up again at Oxbridge. The Miss Notleys, the haberdashers——"

"Hush!" said Warrington—"glad to make your acquaintance, Pendennis. Heard a good deal about you."

The young men were friends immediately, and at once deep in college-talk. And Pen, who had been acting rather the fine gentleman on a previous day, when he pretended to Lowton that he could not drink port wine at dinner, seeing Warrington take his share with a great deal of gusto, did not scruple about helping himself any more, rather to the disappointment of honest Lowton. When the dinner was over, Warrington asked Arthur where he was going.

"I thought of going home to dress, and hear Grisi in Norma," Pen said.

"Are you going to meet anybody there?" he asked.

Pen said, "No—only to hear the music, of which he was very fond."

"You had much better come home and smoke a pipe with me," said Warrington,—"a very short one. Come, I live close by in Lamb Court, and we'll talk over Boniface and old times."

They went away; Lowton sighed after them. He knew that Warrington was a baronet's son, and he looked up with simple reverence to all the aristocracy. Pen and Warrington became sworn friends from that night. Warrington's cheerfulness and jovial temper, his good sense, his rough welcome, and his never-failing pipe of tobacco, charmed Pen, who found it more pleasant to dive into shilling taverns with him than to dine in solitary state amongst the silent and polite frequenters of the Polyanthus.

Ere long Pen gave up his lodgings in St. James's, to which he had migrated on quitting his hotel, and found it was much more economical to take up his abode with Warrington in Lamb Court, and furnish and occupy his friend's vacant room there. For it must be said of Pen, that no man was more easily led than he to do a thing, when it was a novelty, or when he had a mind to it. And Pidgeon, the youth, and Flanagan, the laundress, divided their allegiance now between Warrington and Pen.

CHAPTER XXX.

OLD AND NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

ELATED with the idea of seeing life, Pen went into a hundred queer London haunts. He liked to think he was consorting with all sorts of men—so he beheld coal-heavers in their tap-rooms; boxers in their inn-parlours; honest citizens disporting in the suburbs or on the river; and he would have liked to hob and nob with celebrated pick-pockets, or drink a pot of ale with a company of burglars and cracksmen, had chance afforded him an opportunity of making the acquaintance of this class of society. It was good to see the gravity with which Warrington listened to the Tutbury Pet or the Brighton Stunner at the Champion's Arms, and behold the interest which he took in the coalheaving company assembled at the Fox-under-the-Hill. His acquaintance with the public-houses of the metropolis and its neighbourhood, and with the frequenters of their various parlours, was prodigious. He was the personal friend of the landlord and landlady, and welcome to the bar as to the club-room. He liked their society, he said, better than that of his own class, whose manners annoyed him, and whose conversation bored him. "In society," he used to say, "everybody is the same, wears the same dress, eats and drinks, and says the same things; one

young dandy at the club talks and looks just like another, one Miss at a ball exactly resembles another, whereas there's character here. I like to talk with the strongest man in England, or the man who can drink the most beer in England, or with that tremendous republican of a hatter, who thinks Thistlewood was the greatest character in history. I like gin-and-water better than claret. I like a sanded floor in Carnaby Market better than a chalked one in Mayfair. I prefer Snobs, I own it." Indeed, this gentleman was a social republican; and it never entered his head while conversing with Jack and Tom that he was in any respect their better; although, perhaps, the deference which they paid him might secretly please him.

Pen followed him then to these various resorts of men with great glee and assiduity. But he was considerably younger, and therefore much more pompous and stately than Warrington; in fact, a young prince in disguise, visiting the poor of his father's kingdom. They respected him as a high chap, a fine fellow, a regular young swell. He had somehow about him an air of imperious good-humour, and a royal frankness and majesty, although he was only heir apparent to twopence-halfpenny, and but one in descent from a gallypot. If these positions are made for us, we acquiesce in them very easily; and are always pretty ready to assume a superiority over those who are as good as ourselves. Pen's condescension at this time of his life was a fine thing to witness. Amongst men of ability this assumption and impertinence passes off with extreme youth: but it is curious to watch the conceit of a generous and clever lad—there is something almost touching in that early exhibition of simplicity and folly.

So, after reading pretty hard of a morning, and, I fear, not law merely, but politics and general history and literature, which were as necessary for the advancement and instruction of a young man as mere dry law, after applying with tolerable assiduity to letters, to reviews, to elemental books of law, and, above all, to the newspaper, until the hour of dinner was drawing nigh, these young gentlemen would sally out upon the town with great spirits and appetite, and bent upon enjoying a merry night as they had passed a pleasant forenoon. It was a jovial time, that of four-and-twenty, when every muscle of mind and body was in healthy action, when the world was new as yet, and one moved over it spurred onwards by good spirits and the delightful capability to enjoy. If ever we feel young afterwards, it is with the comrades of that time: the tunes we hum in our old age, are those we learned then. Sometimes, perhaps, the festivity of that period revives in our memory; but how dingy the pleasure-garden

has grown, how tattered the garlands look, how scant and old the company, and what a number of the lights have gone out since that day! Grey hairs have come on like daylight streaming in—daylight and a headache with it. Pleasure has gone to bed with the rouge on her cheeks. Well, friend, let us walk through the day, sober and sad, but friendly.

I wonder what Laura and Helen would have said, could they have seen, as they might not unfrequently have done had they been up and in London, in the very early morning when the bridges began to blush in the sunrise, and the tranquil streets of the city to shine in the dawn, Mr. Pen and Mr. Warrington rattling over the echoing flags towards the Temple, after one of their wild nights of carouse—nights wild, but not so wicked as such nights sometimes are, for Warrington was a woman-hater; and Pen, as we have said, too lofty to stoop to a vulgar intrigue. Our young Prince of Fairoaks never could speak to one of the sex but with respectful courtesy, and shrank from a coarse word or gesture with instinctive delicacy—for though we have seen him fall in love with a fool, as his betters and inferiors have done, and as it is probable that he did more than once in his life, yet for the time of the delusion it was always as a Goddess that he considered her, and chose to wait upon her. Men serve women kneeling—when they get on their feet, they go away.

That was what an acquaintance of Pen's said to him in his hard homely way;—an old friend with whom he had fallen in again in London—no other than honest Mr. Bows of the Chatteris Theatre, who was now employed as pianoforte player, to accompany the eminent lyrical talent which nightly delighted the public at the Fielding's Head in Covent Garden: and where was held the little club called the Back Kitchen.

Numbers of Pen's friends frequented this very merry meeting. The Fielding's Head had been a house of entertainment, almost since the time when the famous author of "Tom Jones" presided as magistrate in the neighbouring Bow Street; his place was pointed out, and the chair said to have been his, still occupied by the president of the night's entertainment. The worthy Cutts, the landlord of the Fielding's Head, generally occupied this post when not disabled by gout or other illness. His jolly appearance and fine voice may be remembered by some of my male readers; he used to sing profusely in the course of the harmonic meeting, and his songs were of what may be called the British Brandy and Water School of Song—such as "The Good Old English Gentleman," "Dear Tom, this Brown Jug," and

so forth—songs in which pathos and hospitality are blended, and the praises of good liquor and the social affections are chanted in a barytone voice. The charms of our women, the heroic deeds of our naval and military commanders, are often sung in the ballads of this school, and many a time in my youth have I admired how Cutts the singer, after he had worked us all up to patriotic enthusiasm, by describing the way in which the brave Abercrombie received his death-wound, or made us join him in tears, which he shed liberally himself, as in faltering accents he told "how autumn's falling leaf proclaimed the old man he must die"—how Cutts the singer became at once Cutts the landlord, and, before the applause which we were making with our fists on his table, in compliment to his heart-stirring melody, had died away, was calling, "Now, gentlemen, give your orders, the waiter's in the room—John, a champagne cup for Mr. Green. I think, sir, you said sausages and mashed potatoes? John, attend on the gentleman."

"And I'll thank ye give me a glass of punch too, John, and take care the wather boils," a voice would cry not unfrequently, a well-known voice to Pen, which made the lad blush and start when he heard it first—that of the venerable Captain Costigan; who was now established in London, and one of the great pillars of the harmonic meetings at the Fielding's Head.

The Captain's manners and conversation brought very many young men to the place. He was a character, and his fame had begun to spread soon after his arrival in the metropolis, and especially after his daughter's marriage. He was great in his conversation to the friend for the time being (who was the neighbour drinking by his side), about "me daughter." He told of her marriage, and of the events previous and subsequent to that ceremony; of the carriages she kept; of Mirabel's adoration for her and for him; of the hunther pounds which he was at perfect liberty to draw from his son-in-law, whenever necessity urged him. And having stated that it was his firm intention to "dthraw next Sathurday, I give ye me secred word and honour next Sathurday, the fourteenth, when ye'll see the money will be handed over to me at Coutts's, the very instant I present the cheque," the Captain would not unfrequently propose to borrow half-a-crown of his friend until the arrival of that day of Greek Calends, when, on the honour of an officer and a gentleman, he would repee the thrifling obligetion.

Sir Charles Mirabel had not that enthusiastic attachment to his father-in-law, of which the latter sometimes boasted (although in other stages of emotion Cos would inveigh, with tears in his eyes, against

the ingratitude of the child of his bosom, and the stinginess of the wealthy old man who had married her); but the pair had acted not unkindly towards Costigan; had settled a small pension on him, which was paid regularly, and forestalled with even more regularity by poor Cos; and the period of the payments was always well known by his friends at the Fielding's Head, whither the honest Captain took care to repair, bank-notes in hand, calling loudly for change in the midst of the full harmonic meeting. "I think ye'll find *that* note won't be refused at the Bank of England, Cutts, my boy," Captain Costigan would say. "Bows, have a glass? Ye needn't stint yourself to-night, anyhow; and a glass of punch will make ye play *con spirito.*" For he was lavishly free with his money when it came to him, and was scarcely known to button his breeches pocket, except when the coin was gone, or sometimes, indeed, when a creditor came by.

It was in one of these moments of exultation that Pen found his old friend swaggering at the singers' table at the Back Kitchen of the Fielding's Head, and ordering glasses of brandy and water for any of his acquaintances who made their appearance in the apartment. Warrington, who was on confidential terms with the bass singer, made his way up to this quarter of the room, and Pen walked at his friend's heels.

Pen started and blushed to see Costigan. He had just come from Lady Whiston's party, where he had met and spoken with the Captain's daughter again for the first time after very old old days. He came up with outstretched hand, very kindly and warmly to greet the old man; still retaining a strong remembrance of the time when Costigan's daughter had been everything in the world to him. For though this young gentleman may have been somewhat capricious in his attachments, and occasionally have transferred his affections from one woman to another, yet he always respected the place where Love had dwelt, and, like the Sultan of Turkey, desired that honours should be paid to the lady towards whom he had once thrown the royal pocket-handkerchief.

The tipsy Captain returned the clasp of Pen's hand with all the strength of a palm which had become very shaky by the constant lifting up of weights of brandy and water, looked hard in Pen's face, and said, "Grecious heavens, is it possible? Me dear boy, me dear fellow, me dear friend;" and then with a look of muddled curiosity, fairly broke down with, "I know your face, me dear dear friend, but, bedad, I've forgot your name." Five years of constant punch had passed since Pen and Costigan met. Arthur was a good deal changed,

and the Captain may surely be excused for forgetting him; when a man at the actual moment sees things double, we may expect that his view of the past will be rather muzzy.

Pen saw his condition and laughed, although, perhaps, he was somewhat mortified. "Don't you remember me, Captain?" he said. "I am Pendennis—Arthur Pendennis, of Chatteris."

The sound of the young man's friendly voice recalled and steadied Cos's tipsy remembrance, and he saluted Arthur, as soon as he knew him, with a loud volley of friendly greetings. Pen was his dearest boy, his gallant young friend, his noble collagian, whom he had held in his inmost heart ever since they had parted—how was his fawther, no, his mother, and his guardian, the General, the Major. "I preshoom, from your appearance, that you've come into your prawpertee; and, bedad, yee'll spend it like a man of spirit—I'll go bail for *that*. No! not yet come into your estete? If ye want any thrifle, heark ye, there's poor old Jack Costigan has got a guinea or two in his pocket—and, be heavens! *you* shall never want, Awthur, me dear boy. What'll ye have? John, come hither, and look aloive; give this gentleman a glass of punch, and I'll pay for't.—Your friend? I've seen him before. Permit me to have the honour of making meself known to ye, sir, and requesting ye'll take a glass of punch."

"I don't envy Sir Charles Mirabel his father-in-law," thought Pendennis. "And how is my old friend, Mr. Bows, Captain? Have you any news of him, and do you see him still?"

"No doubt he's very well," said the Captain, jingling his money, and whistling the air of a song—"The Little Doodeen"—for the singing of which he was celebrated at the Fielding's Head. "Me dear boy—I've forgot your name again—but me name's Costigan, Jack Costigan, and I'd loike ye to take as many tumblers of punch in me name as ever ye loike. Ye know me name; I'm not ashamed of it." And so the Captain went maundering on.

"It's pay-day with the General," said Mr. Hodgen, the bass singer, with whom Warrington was in deep conversation: "and he's a precious deal more than half-seas over. He has already tried that 'Little Doodeen' of his, and broke it, too, just before I sang 'King Death. Have you heard my new song, 'The Body Snatcher,' Mr. Warrington?—angcored at St. Bartholomew's the other night—composed expressly for me. Per'aps you or your friend would like a copy of the song, sir? John, just 'ave the kindness to 'and over a 'Body Snatcher' 'ere, will yer?—There's a portrait of me, sir, as I sing it—as the Snatcher—considered rather like."

"Thank you," said Warrington; "heard it nine times—know it by heart, Hodgen."

Here the gentleman who presided at the pianoforte began to play upon his instrument, and Pen, looking in the direction of the music, beheld that very Mr. Bows, for whom he had been asking but now, and whose existence Costigan had momentarily forgotten. The little old man sate before the battered piano (which had injured its constitution wofully by sitting up so many nights, and spoke with a voice, as it were, at once hoarse and faint), and accompanied the singers, or played with taste and grace in the intervals of the songs.

Bows had seen and recollected Pen at once when the latter came into the room, and had remarked the eager warmth of the young man's recognition of Costigan. He now began to play an air, which Pen instantly remembered as one which used to be sung by the chorus of villagers in "The Stranger," just before Mrs. Haller came in. It shook Pen as he heard it. He remembered how his heart used to beat as that air was played, and before the divine Emily made her entry. Nobody, save Arthur, took any notice of old Bows's playing: it was scarcely heard amidst the clatter of knives and forks, the calls for poached eggs and kidneys, and the tramp of guests and waiters.

Pen went up and kindly shook the player by the hand at the end of his performance; and Bows greeted Arthur with great respect and cordiality. "What, you haven't forgot the old tune, Mr. Pendennis?" he said; "I thought you'd remember it. I take it, it was the first tune of that sort you ever heard played—wasn't it, sir? You were quite a young chap then. I fear the Captain's very bad to-night. He breaks out on a pay-day; and I shall have the deuce's own trouble in getting him home. We live together. We still hang on, sir, in partnership, though Miss Em—though my Lady Mirabel has left the firm. —And so you remember old times, do you? Wasn't she a beauty, sir?—Your health and my service to you,"—and he took a sip at the pewter measure of porter which stood by his side as he played.

Pen had many opportunities of seeing his early acquaintances afterwards, and of renewing his relations with Costigan and the old musician.

As they sate thus in friendly colloquy, men of all sorts and conditions entered and quitted the house of entertainment; and Pen had the pleasure of seeing as many different persons of his race, as the most eager observer need desire to inspect. Healthy country tradesmen and farmers, in London for their business, came and recreated

themselves with the jolly singing and suppers or the Back Kitchen,—squads of young apprentices and assistants, the shutters being closed over the scene of their labours, came hither, for fresh air doubtless,—rakish young medical students, gallant, dashing, what is called "loudly" dressed, and (must it be owned?) somewhat dirty,—were here smoking and drinking, and vociferously applauding the songs;—young university bucks were to be found here, too, with that indescribable genteel simper which is only learned at the knees of Alma Mater;—and handsome young guardsmen, and florid bucks from the St. James's Street Clubs;—nay, senators English and Irish: and even members of the House of Peers.

The bass singer had made an immense hit with his song of "The Body Snatcher," and the town rushed to listen to it. A curtain drew aside, and Mr. Hodgen appeared in the character of the Snatcher, sitting on a coffin, with a flask of gin before him, with a spade, and a candle stuck in a skull. The song was sung with a really admirable terrific humour. The singer's voice went down so low, that its grumbles rumbled into the hearer's awe-stricken soul; and in the chorus he clamped with his spade, and gave a demoniac "Ha! ha!" which caused the very glasses to quiver on the table, as with terror. None of the other singers, not even Cutts himself, as that high-minded man owned, could stand up before the Snatcher, and he commonly used to retire to Mrs. Cutts's private apartments, or into the bar, before that fatal song extinguished him. Poor Cos's ditty, "The Little Doodeen," which Bows accompanied charmingly on the piano, was sung but to a few admirers, who might choose to remain after the tremendous resurrectionist chant. The room was commonly emptied after that, or only left in possession of a very few and persevering votaries of pleasure.

Whilst Pen and his friend were sitting here together one night, or rather morning, two habitués of the house entered almost together. "Mr. Hoolan and Mr. Doolan," whispered Warrington to Pen, saluting these gentlemen, and in the latter Pen recognised his friend of the Alacrity coach, who could not dine with Pen on the day on which the latter had invited him, being compelled by his professional duties to decline dinner-engagements on Fridays, he had stated, with his compliments to Mr. Pendennis.

Doolan's paper, the "Dawn," was lying on the table much bestained by porter, and cheek-by-jowl with Hoolan's paper, which we shall call the "Day;" the "Dawn" was liberal—the "Day" was ultra conservative. Many of our Journals are officered by Irish gentlemen, and their

gallant brigade does the penning among us, as their ancestors used to transact the fighting in Europe; and engage under many a flag, to be good friends when the battle is over.

"Kidneys, John, and a glass of stout," says Hoolan. "How are you, Morgan? how's Mrs. Doolan?"

"Doing pretty well, thank ye, Mick, my boy — faith she's accustomed to it," said Doolan. "How's the lady that owns ye? Maybe I'll step down Sunday, and have a glass of punch, Kilburn way."

"Don't bring Patsey with you, Morgan, for our Georgy's got the measles," said the friendly Mick, and they straightway fell to talk about matters connected with their trade—about the foreign mails—about who was correspondent at Paris, and who wrote from Madrid—about the expense the "Morning Journal" was at in sending couriers, about the circulation of the "Evening Star," and so forth.

Warrington, laughing, took the "Dawn," which was lying before him, and pointed to one of the leading articles in that journal, which commenced thus—

"As rogues of note in former days who had some wicked work to perform,—an enemy to put out of the way, a quantity of false coin to be passed, a lie to be told or a murder to be done,—employed a professional perjurer or assassin to do the work, which they were themselves too notorious or too cowardly to execute; our notorious contemporary, the 'Day,' engages smashers out of doors to utter forgeries against individuals, and calls in auxiliary cut-throats to murder the reputation of those who offend him. A black vizarded ruffian (whom we will unmask), who signs the forged name of Trefoil, is at present one of the chief bravoes and bullies in our contemporary's establishment. He is the eunuch who brings the bowstring, and strangles at the order of the 'Day.' We can convict this cowardly slave, and propose to do so. The charge which he has brought against Lord Bangbanagher, because he is a liberal Irish peer, and against the Board of Poor Law Guardians of the Bangbanagher Union, is," &c.

"How did they like the article at your place, Mick?" asked Morgan; "when the Captain puts his hand to it he's a tremendous hand at a smasher. He wrote the article in two hours—in—whew—you know where, while the boy was waiting."

"Our governor thinks the public don't mind a straw about these newspaper rows, and has told the Docther to stop answering," said the other. "Them two talked it out together in my room. The Docther would have liked a turn, for he says it's such easy writing, and

requires no reading up of a subject: but the governor put a stopper on him."

"The taste for eloquence is going out, Mick," said Morgan.

"'Deed then it is, Morgan," said Mick. "That was fine writing when the Docther wrote in the 'Phaynix,' and he and Condy Roony blazed away at each other day after day."

"And with powder and shot, too, as well as paper," said Morgan. "Faith, the Docther was out twice, and Condy Rooney winged his man."

"They are talking about Doctor Boyne and Captain Shandon," Warrington said, "who are the two Irish controversialists of the 'Dawn' and the 'Day,' Dr. Boyne being the Protestant champion, and Captain Shandon the liberal orator. They are the best friends in the world, I believe, in spite of their newspaper controversies; and though they cry out against the English for abusing their country, by Jove they abuse it themselves more in a single article than we should take the pains to do in a dozen volumes. How are you, Doolan?"

"Your servant, Mr. Warrington—Mr. Pendennis, I am delighted to have the honour of seeing ye again. The night's journey on the top of the Alacrity was one of the most agreeable I ever enjoyed in my life, and it was your liveliness and urbanity that made the trip so charming. I have often thought over that happy night, sir, and talked over it to Mrs. Doolan. I have seen your elegant young friend, Mr. Foker, too, here, sir, not unfrequently. He is an occasional frequenter of this hostelry, and a right good one it is. Mr. Pendennis, when I saw you I was on the 'Tom and Jerry' Weekly Paper; I have now the honour to be sub-editor of the 'Dawn,' one of the best written papers of the empire"—and he bowed very slightly to Mr. Warrington. His speech was unctuous and measured, his courtesy oriental, his tone, when talking with the two Englishmen, quite different to that with which he spoke to his comrade.

"Why the devil will the fellow compliment so?" growled Warrington, with a sneer which he hardly took the pains to suppress. "Psha—who comes here?—all Parnassus is abroad to-night: here's Archer. We shall have some fun. Well, Archer, House up?"

"Haven't been there. I have been," said Archer, with an air of mystery, "where I was wanted. Get me some supper, John—something substantial. I hate your grandees who give you nothing to eat. If it had been at Apsley House, it would have been quite different. The Duke knows what I like, and says to the Groom of the Chambers,

'Martin, you will have some cold beef, not too much done, and a pint bottle of pale ale, and some brown sherry, ready in my study as usual; Archer is coming here this evening.' The Duke doesn't eat supper himself, but he likes to see a man enjoy a hearty meal, and he knows that I dine early. A man can't live upon air, be hanged to him."

"Let me introduce you to my friend, Mr. Pendennis," Warrington said, with great gravity. "Pen, this is Mr. Archer, whom you have heard me talk about. You must know Pen's uncle, the Major, Archer, you who know everybody?"

"Dined with him the day before yesterday at Gaunt House," Archer said. "We were four—the French Ambassador, Steyne, and we two commoners."

"Why, my uncle is in Scot—" Pen was going to break out, but Warrington pressed his foot under the table as a signal for him to be quiet.

"It was about the same business that I have been to the palace to-night," Archer went on simply, "and where I've been kept four hours, in an anteroom, with nothing but yesterday's 'Times,' which I knew by heart, as I wrote three of the leading articles myself; and though the Lord Chamberlain came in four times, and once holding the royal teacup and saucer in his hand, he did not so much as say to me, 'Archer, will you have a cup of tea?'"

"Indeed! what is in the wind now?" asked Warrington—and turning to Pen, added, "You know, I suppose, that when there is anything wrong at court they always send for Archer."

"There is something wrong," said Mr. Archer, "and as the story will be all over the town in a day or two I don't mind telling it. At the last Chantilly races, where I rode Brian Boru for my old friend the Duke de St. Cloud—the old King said to me, Archer, I'm uneasy about St. Cloud. I have arranged his marriage with the Princess Marie Cunégonde; the peace of Europe depends upon it—for Russia will declare war if the marriage does not take place, and the young fool is so mad about Madame Massena, Marshal Massena's wife, that he actually refuses to be a party to the marriage. Well, sir, I spoke to St. Cloud, and having got him into pretty good humour by winning the race, and a good bit of money into the bargain, he said to me, 'Archer, tell the Governor I'll think of it.'"

"How do you say Governor in French?" asked Pen, who piqued himself on knowing that language.

"Oh, we speak in English—I taught him when we were boys, and

I saved his life at Twickenham, when he fell out of a punt," Archer said. "I shall never forget the Queen's looks as I brought him out of the water. She gave me this diamond ring, and always calls me Charles to this day."

"Madame Massena must be rather an old woman, Archer," Warrington said.

"Dev'lish old—old enough to be his grandmother; I told him so," Archer answered at once. "But those attachments for old women are the deuce and all. That's what the King feels: that's what shocks the poor Queen so much. They went away from Paris last Tuesday night, and are living at this present moment at Jaunay's hotel."

"Has there been a private marriage, Archer?" asked Warrington.

"Whether there has or not I don't know," Mr. Archer replied; "all I know is that I was kept waiting four hours at the palace; that I never saw a man in such a state of agitation as the King of Belgium when he came out to speak to me, and that I'm devilish hungry—and here comes some supper."

"He has been pretty well to-night," said Warrington, as the pair went home together: "but I have known him in much greater force, and keeping a whole room in a state of wonder. Put aside his archery practice, that man is both able and honest—a good man of business, an excellent friend, admirable to his family as husband, father, and son."

"What is it makes him pull the long bow in that wonderful manner?"

"An amiable insanity," answered Warrington. "He never did anybody harm by his talk, or said evil of anybody. He is a stout politician too, and would never write a word or do an act against his party, as many of us do."

"Of *us!* Who are *we?*" asked Pen. "Of what profession is Mr. Archer?"

"Of the Corporation of the Goosequill—of the Press, my boy," said Warrington; "of the fourth estate."

"Are you, too, of the craft, then?" Pendennis said.

"We will talk about that another time," answered the other. They were passing through the Strand as they talked, and by a newspaper office, which was all lighted up and bright. Reporters were coming out of the place, or rushing up to it in cabs; there were lamps burning in the editors' rooms, and above where the

compositors were at work: the windows of the building were in a blaze of gas.

"Look at that, Pen," Warrington said. "There she is—the great engine—she never sleeps. She has her ambassadors in every quarter of the world—her couriers upon every road. Her officers march along with armies, and her envoys walk into statesmen's cabinets. They are ubiquitous. Yonder journal has an agent, at this minute, giving bribes at Madrid; and another inspecting the price of potatoes in Covent Garden. Look! here comes the Foreign Express galloping in. They will be able to give news to Downing Street to-morrow: funds will rise or fall, fortunes be made or lost; Lord B. will get up, and, holding the paper in his hand, and seeing the noble marquis in his place, will make a great speech; and—and Mr. Doolan will be called away from his supper at the Back Kitchen; for he is foreign sub-editor, and sees the mail on the newspaper sheet before he goes to his own."

And so talking, the friends turned into their chambers, as the dawn was beginning to peep.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN WHICH THE PRINTER'S DEVIL COMES TO THE DOOR.

PEN, in the midst of his revels and enjoyments, humble as they were, and moderate in cost if not in kind, saw an awful sword hanging over him which must drop down before long and put an end to his frolics and feasting. His money was very nearly spent. His club subscription had carried away a third part of it. He had paid for the chief articles of furniture with which he had supplied his little bed-room: in fine, he was come to the last five-pound note in his pocket-book, and could think of no method of providing a successor: for our friend had been bred up like a young prince as yet, or as a child in arms whom his mother feeds when it cries out.

Warrington did not know what his comrade's means were. An only child with a mother at her country house, and an old dandy of an uncle who dined with a great man every day, Pen might have a large bank at his command for anything that the other knew. He had gold chains and a dressing-case fit for a lord. His habits were those of an aristocrat,—not that he was expensive upon any particular point, for he dined and laughed over the pint of porter and the plate of beef from the cook's shop with perfect content and good appetite,

—but he could not adopt the penny-wise precautions of life. He could not give twopence to a waiter; he could not refrain from taking a cab if he had a mind to do so, or if it rained, and as surely as he took the cab he overpaid the driver. He had a scorn for cleaned gloves and minor economies. Had he been bred to ten thousand a-year he could scarcely have been more free-handed; and for a beggar, with a sad story, or a couple of pretty piteous-faced children, he never could resist putting his hand into his pocket. It was a sumptuous nature, perhaps, that could not be brought to regard money; a natural generosity and kindness; and possibly a petty vanity that was pleased with praise, even with the praise of waiters and cabmen. I doubt whether the wisest of us know what our own motives are, and whether some of the actions of which we are the very proudest will not surprise us when we trace them, as we shall one day, to their source.

Warrington then did not know, and Pen had not thought proper to confide to his friend, his pecuniary history. That Pen had been wild and wickedly extravagant at college, the other was aware; every body at college was extravagant and wild; but how great the son's expenses had been, and how small the mother's means, were points which had not been as yet submitted to Mr. Warrington's examination.

At last the story came out, while Pen was grimly surveying the change for the last five-pound note, as it lay upon the tray from the public-house by Mr. Warrington's pot of ale.

"It is the last rose of summer," said Pen; "it's blooming companions have gone long ago; and behold the last one of the garland has shed its leaves;" and he told Warrington the whole story which we know of his mother's means, of his own follies, of Laura's generosity; during which time Warrington smoked his pipe and listened intent.

"Impecuniosity will do you good," Pen's friend said, knocking out the ashes at the end of the narration; "I don't know anything more wholesome for a man—for an honest man, mind you—for another, the medicine loses its effect—than a state of tick. It is an alterative and a tonic; it keeps your moral man in a perpetual state of excitement: as a man who is riding at a fence, or has his opponent's single stick before him, is forced to look his obstacle steadily in the face, and brace himself to repulse or overcome it; a little necessity brings out your pluck if you have any, and nerves you to grapple with fortune. You will discover what a number of things you can do without when

you have no money to buy them. You won't want new gloves and varnished boots, eau de Cologne, and cabs to ride in. You have been bred up as a molly-coddle, Pen, and spoilt by the women. A single man who has health and brains, and can't find a livelihood in the world, doesn't deserve to stay there. Let him pay his last halfpenny and jump over Waterloo Bridge. Let him steal a leg of mutton and be transported and get out of the country—he is not fit to live in it. Dixi; I have spoken. Give us another pull at the pale ale."

"You have certainly spoken; but how is one to live?" said Pen. "There is beef and bread in plenty in England, but you must pay for it with work or money. And who will take my work? and what work can I do?"

Warrington burst out laughing. "Suppose we advertise in the 'Times,'" he said, "for an usher's place at a classical and commercial academy—A gentleman, B.A. of St. Boniface College, Oxbridge, and who was plucked for his degree—"

"Confound you," cried Pen.

"— Wishes to give lessons in classics and mathematics, and the rudiments of the French language; he can cut hair, attend to the younger pupils, and play a second on the piano with the daughters of the principal. Address A. P., Lamb Court, Temple."

"Go on," said Pen, growling.

"Men take to all sorts of professions. Why, there is your friend Bloundell—Bloundell is a professional blackleg, and travels the continent, where he picks up young gentlemen of fashion and fleeces them. There is Bob O'Toole, with whom I was at school, who drives the Ballynafad mail now, and carries honest Jack Finucane's own correspondence to that city. I know a man, sir, a doctor's son, like—well, don't be angry, I meant nothing offensive—a doctor's son, I say, who was walking the hospitals here, and quarrelled with his governor on questions of finance, and what did he do when he came to his last five-pound note? he let his mustachios grow, went into a provincial town, where he announced himself as Professor Spineto, chiropodist to the Emperor of All the Russias, and by a happy operation on the editor of the county newspaper, established himself in practice, and lived reputably for three years. He has been reconciled to his family, and has now succeeded to his father's gallypots."

"Hang gallypots!" cried Pen. "I can't drive a coach, cut corns, or cheat at cards. There's nothing else you propose."

"Yes; there's our own correspondent," Warrington said. "Every man has his secrets, look you. Before you told me the story of your

money-matters, I had no idea but that you were a gentleman of fortune, for, with your confounded airs and appearance, anybody would suppose you to be so. From what you tell me about your mother's income, it is clear that you must not lay any more hands on it. You can't go on sponging upon the women. You must pay off that trump of a girl. Laura is her name?—here's your health, Laura!—and carry a hod rather than ask for a shilling from home."

"But how earn one?" asked Pen.

"How do I live, think you?" said the other. "On my younger brother's allowance, Pendennis? I have secrets of my own, my boy;" and here Warrington's countenance fell. "I made away with that allowance five years ago: if I had made away with myself a little time before, it would have been better. I have played off my own bat, ever since. I don't want much money. When my purse is out, I go to work and fill it, and then lie idle like a serpent or an Indian, until I have digested the mass. Look, I begin to feel empty," Warrington said, and showed Pen a long lean purse, with but a few sovereigns at one end of it.

"But how do you fill it?" said Pen.

"I write," said Warrington. "I don't tell the world that I do so," he added with a blush. "I do not choose that questions should be asked: or, perhaps, I am an ass, and don't wish it to be said that George Warrington writes for bread. But I write in the Law Reviews: look here, these articles are mine." And he turned over some sheets. "I write in a newspaper now and then, of which a friend of mine is editor." And Warrington, going with Pendennis to the club one day, called for a file of the "Dawn," and pointed with his finger silently to one or two articles, which Pen read with delight. He had no difficulty in recognising the style afterwards—the strong thoughts and curt periods, the sense, the satire, and the scholarship.

"I am not up to this," said Pen, with a genuine admiration of his friend's powers. "I know very little about politics or history, Warrington; and have but a smattering of letters. I can't fly upon such a wing as yours."

"But you can on your own, my boy, which is lighter, and soars higher, perhaps," the other said, good-naturedly. "Those little scraps and verses which I have seen of yours show me, what is rare in these days, a natural gift, sir. You needn't blush, you conceited young jackanapes. You have thought so yourself any time these ten years. You have got the sacred flame—a little of the real poetical fire, sir, I think; and all our oil-lamps are nothing, compared to that, though

ever so well trimmed. You are a poet, Pen, my boy," and so speaking, Warrington stretched out his broad hand, and clapped Pen on the shoulder.

Arthur was so delighted that the tears came into his eyes. "How kind you are to me, Warrington!" he said.

"I like you, old boy," said the other. "I was dev'lish lonely in chambers and wanted somebody, and the sight of your honest face somehow pleased me. I liked the way you laughed at Lowton—that poor good little snob. And, in fine, the reason why I cannot tell—but so it is, young 'un. I'm alone in the world, sir; and I wanted some one to keep me company;" and a glance of extreme kindness and melancholy passed out of Warrington's dark eyes.

Pen was too much pleased with his own thoughts to perceive the sadness of the friend who was complimenting him. "Thank you, Warrington," he said, "thank you for your friendship to me, and—and what you say about me. I *have* often thought I was a poet. I will be one—I think I am one, as you say so, though the world mayn't. Is it—is it the Ariadne in Naxos which you liked (I was only eighteen when I wrote it), or the Prize Poem?"

Warrington burst into a roar of laughter. "Why, you young goose," he yelled out—"of all the miserable weak rubbish I ever tried, Ariadne in Naxos is the most mawkish and disgusting. The Prize Poem is so pompous and feeble, that I'm positively surprised, sir, it didn't get the medal. You don't suppose that you are a serious poet, do you, and are going to cut out Milton and Æschylus? Are you setting up to be a Pindar, you absurd little tom-tit, and fancy you have the strength and pinion which the Theban eagles bear, sailing with supreme dominion through the azure fields of air? No, my boy, I think you can write a magazine article, and turn out a pretty copy of verses; that's what I think of you."

"By Jove!" said Pen, bouncing up and stamping his foot, "I'll show you that I am a better man than you think for."

Warrington only laughed the more, and blew twenty-four puffs rapidly out of his pipe by way of reply to Pen.

An opportunity for showing his skill presented itself before very long. That eminent publisher, Mr. Bacon (formerly Bacon and Bungay) of Paternoster Row, besides being the proprietor of the "Legal Review," in which Mr. Warrington wrote, and of other periodicals of note and gravity, used to present to the world every year a beautiful gilt volume called the "Spring Annual," edited by the Lady Violet Lebas, and

numbering amongst its contributors not only the most eminent, but the most fashionable, poets of our time. Young Lord Dodo's poems first appeared in this miscellany—the Honourable Percy Popjoy, whose chivalrous ballads have obtained him such a reputation—Bedwin Sands's Eastern Ghazuls, and many more of the works of our young nobles were first given to the world in the "Spring Annual," which has since shared the fate of other vernal blossoms, and perished out of the world. The book was daintily illustrated with pictures of reigning beauties, or other prints of a tender and voluptuous character; and, as these plates were prepared long beforehand, requiring much time in engraving, it was the eminent poets who had to write to the plates, and not the painters who illustrated the poems.

One day, just when this volume was on the eve of publication, it chanced that Mr. Warrington called in Paternoster Row to talk with Mr. Hack, Mr. Bacon's reader and general manager of publications —for Mr. Bacon, not having the least taste in poetry or in literature of any kind, wisely employed the services of a professional gentleman. Warrington, then, going into Mr. Hack's room on business of his own, found that gentleman with a number of proof plates and sheets of the "Spring Annual" before him, and glanced at some of them.

Percy Popjoy had written some verses to illustrate one of the pictures, which was called the Church Porch. A Spanish damsel was hastening to church with a large prayer-book; a youth in a cloak was hidden in a niche watching this young woman. The picture was pretty: but the great genius of Percy Popjoy had deserted him, for he had made the most execrable verses which ever were perpetrated by a young nobleman.

Warrington burst out laughing as he read the poem: and Mr. Hack laughed too, but with rather a rueful face.—"It won't do," he said, "the public won't stand it. Bungay's people are going to bring out a very good book, and have set up Miss Bunion against Lady Violet. We have most titles to be sure—but the verses are too bad. Lady Violet herself owns it; she's busy with her own poem; what's to be done? We can't lose the plate. The governor gave sixty pounds for it!"

"I know a fellow who would do some verses, I think," said Warrington. "Let me take the plate home in my pocket: and send to my chambers in the morning for the verses. You'll pay well, of course?"

"Of course," said Mr. Hack; and Warrington, having dispatched his own business, went home to Mr. Pen, plate in hand.

"Now, boy, here's a chance for you. Turn me off a copy of verses to this."

"What's this? A Church Porch—A lady entering it, and a youth out of a wine-shop window ogling her.—What the deuce am I to do with it?"

"Try," said Warrington. "Earn your livelihood for once, you who long so to do it."

"Well, I will try," said Pen.

"And I'll go out to dinner," said Warrington, and left Mr. Pen in a brown study.

When Warrington came home that night at a very late hour, the verses were done. "There they are," said Pen. "I screwed 'em out at last. I think they'll do."

"I think they will," said Warrington, after reading them; they ran as follows:

The Church Porch.

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot,
  Sometimes I hover,
And at the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
  Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout
  And noise and humming:
They've stopp'd the chiming bell,
I hear the organ's swell—
  She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast,
  And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast.
She comes—she's here—she's past.
  May Heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturb'd, fair saint,
Pour out your praise or plaint
  Meekly and duly.
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
  With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
  Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see through Heaven's gate,
  Angels within it.

"Have you got any more, young fellow?" asked Warrington. 'We must make them give you a couple of guineas a page; and if the verses are liked, why, you'll get an entrée into Bacon's magazines, and may turn a decent penny."

Pen examined his portfolio and found another ballad which he thought might figure with advantage in the "Spring Annual," and consigning these two precious documents to Warrington, the pair

walked from the Temple, to the famous haunt of the Muses and their masters, Paternoster Row. Bacon's shop was an ancient low-browed building with a few of the books published by the firm displayed in the windows, under a bust of my Lord of Verulam, and the name of Mr. Bacon in brass on the private door. Exactly opposite to Bacon's house was that of Mr. Bungay, which was newly painted and elaborately decorated in the style of the seventeenth century, so that you might have fancied stately Mr. Evelyn passing over the threshold, or curious Mr. Pepys examining the books in the window. Warrington went into the shop of Mr. Bacon, but Pen stayed without. It was agreed that his ambassador should act for him entirely; and the young fellow paced up and down the street in a very nervous condition until he should learn the result of the negotiation. Many a poor devil before him has trodden those flags, with similar cares and anxieties at his heels, his bread and his fame dependent upon the sentence of his magnanimous patrons of the Row. Pen looked at all the wonders of all the shops; and the strange variety of literature which they exhibit. In this were displayed black-letter volumes and books in the clear pale types of Aldus and Elzevir: in the next, you might see the "Penny Horrific Register;" the "Halfpenny Annals of Crime," and "History of the most celebrated murderers of all countries," "The Raff's Magazine," "The Larky Swell," and other publications of the penny press; whilst at the next window, portraits of ill-favoured individuals, with facsimiles of the venerated signatures of the Reverend Grimes Wapshot, the Reverend Elias Howle, and the works written and the sermons preached by them, showed the British Dissenter where he could find mental pabulum. Hard by would be a little casement hung with emblems, with medals and rosaries, with little paltry prints of saints gilt and painted, and books of controversial theology, by which the faithful of the Roman opinion might learn a short way to deal with Protestants, at a penny a piece or ninepence the dozen for distribution; whilst in the very next window you might see "Come out of Rome," a sermon preached at the opening of the Shepherd's Bush College, by John Thomas Lord Bishop of Ealing. Scarce an opinion but has its expositor and its place of exhibition in this peaceful old Paternoster Row, under the toll of the bells of Saint Paul.

Pen looked in at all the windows and shops, as a gentleman, who is going to have an interview with the dentist, examines the books on the waiting-room table. He remembered them afterwards. It seemed to him that Warrington would never come out; and

indeed the latter was engaged for some time in pleading his friend's cause.

Pen's natural conceit would have swollen immensely if he could but have heard the report which Warrington gave of him. It happened that Mr. Bacon himself had occasion to descend to Mr. Hack's room whilst Warrington was talking there, and Warrington knowing Bacon's weaknesses, acted upon them with great adroitness in his friend's behalf. In the first place, he put on his hat to speak to Bacon, and addressed him from the table on which he seated himself. Bacon liked to be treated with rudeness by a gentleman, and used to pass it on to his inferiors as boys pass the mark. "What! not know Mr. Pendennis, Mr. Bacon?" Warrington said. "You can't live much in the world, or you would know him. A man of property in the West, of one of the most ancient families in England, related to half the nobility in the empire—he's cousin to Lord Pontypool—he was one of the most distinguished men at Oxbridge; he dines at Gaunt House every week."

"Law bless me, you don't say so, sir. Well—really—Law bless me now," said Mr. Bacon.

"I have just been showing Mr. Hack some of his verses, which he sat up last night, at my request, to write; and Hack talks about giving him a copy of the book—the what-d'-you-call-'em."

"Law bless me now, does he? The what-d'-you-call-'em. Indeed!"

"'The Spring Annual' is its name,—as payment for these verses. You don't suppose that such a man as Mr. Arthur Pendennis gives up a dinner at Gaunt House for nothing? You know, as well as anybody, that the men of fashion want to be paid."

"That they do, Mr. Warrington, sir," said the publisher.

"I tell you he's a star; he'll make a name, sir. He's a new man, sir."

"They've said that of so many of those young swells, Mr. Warrington," the publisher interposed with a sigh. "There was Lord Viscount Dodo, now; I gave his Lordship a good bit of money for his poems, and only sold eighty copies. Mr. Popjoy's Hadgincourt, sir, fell dead."

"Well, then, I'll take my man over to Bungay," Warrington said, and rose from the table. This threat was too much for Mr. Bacon, who was instantly ready to accede to any reasonable proposal of Mr. Warrington's, and finally asked his manager what those proposals were. When he heard that the negotiation only related as yet to a

couple of ballads, which Mr. Warrington offered for the "Spring Annual," Mr. Bacon said, "Law bless you, give him a cheque directly;" and with this paper Warrington went out to his friend, and placed it, grinning, in Pen's hands. Pen was as elated as if somebody had left him a fortune. He offered Warrington a dinner at Richmond instantly. "What should he go and buy for Laura and his mother? He must buy something for them."

"They'll like the book better than anything else," said Warrington, "with the young one's name to the verses, printed among the swells."

"Thank God; thank God!" cried Arthur, "I needn't be a charge upon the old mother. I can pay off Laura now. I can get my own living. I can make my own way."

"I can marry the grand vizier's daughter: I can purchase a house in Belgrave Square; I can build a fine castle in the air;" said Warrington, pleased with the other's exultation. "Well, you may get bread and cheese, Pen: and I own it tastes well, the bread which you earn yourself."

They had a magnum of claret at dinner at the club that day, at Pen's charges. It was long since he had indulged in such a luxury, but Warrington would not baulk him: and they drank together to the health of the "Spring Annual."

It never rains but it pours, according to the proverb; so very speedily another chance occurred, by which Mr. Pen was to be helped in his scheme of making a livelihood. Warrington one day threw him a letter across the table, which was brought by a printer's boy, "from Captain Shandon, sir"—the little emissary said: and then went and fell asleep on his accustomed bench in the passage. He paid many a subsequent visit there, and brought many a message to Pen.

"*F. P. Tuesday Morning.*

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Bungay will be here to-day, about the 'Pall-Mall Gazette.' You would be the very man to help us *with a genuine West-end article*,—you understand—dashing, trenchant, and d—— aristocratic. Lady Hipshaw will write: but she's not much you know, and we've two lords; but the less they do the better. We must have you. We'll give you your own terms, and we'll make a hit with the 'Gazette.'

"Shall B. come and see you, or can you look in upon me here?

"Ever yours,

"C. S."

"Some more opposition," Warrington said, when Pen had read the note. "Bungay and Bacon are at daggers drawn; each married the sister of the other, and they were for some time the closest friends and partners. Hack says it was Mrs. Bungay who caused all the mischief between the two; whereas Shandon, who reads for Bungay a good deal, says Mrs. Bacon did the business; but I don't know which is right, Peachum or Lockit. Since they have separated, it is a furious war between the two publishers; and no sooner does one bring out a book of travels, or poems, a magazine or periodical, quarterly, or monthly, or weekly, or annual, but the rival is in the field with something similar. I have heard poor Shandon tell with great glee how he made Bungay give a grand dinner at Blackwall to all his writers, by saying that Bacon had invited his corps to an entertainment at Greenwich. When Bungay engaged your celebrated friend Mr. Wagg to edit the 'Londoner,' Bacon straightway rushed off and secured Mr. Grindle to give his name to the 'Westminster Magazine.' When Bacon brought out his comic Irish novel of 'Barney Brallagan,' off went Bungay to Dublin, and produced his rollicking Hibernian story of 'Looney Mac Twolter.' When Doctor Hicks brought out his 'Wanderings in Mesopotamia' under Bacon's auspices, Bungay produced Professor Sadiman's 'Researches in Zahara;' and Bungay is publishing his 'Pall-Mall Gazette' as a counterpoise to Bacon's 'Whitehall Review.' Let us go and hear about the 'Gazette.' There may be a place for you in it, Pen, my boy. We will go and see Shandon. We are sure to find him at home."

"Where does he live?" asked Pen.

"In the Fleet Prison," Warrington said. "And very much at home he is there, too. He is the king of the place."

Pen had never seen this scene of London life, and walked with no small interest in at the grim gate of that dismal edifice. They went through the ante-room, where the officers and janitors of the place were seated, and passing in at the wicket, entered the prison. The noise and the crowd, the life and the shouting, the shabby bustle of the place, struck and excited Pen. People moved about ceaselessly and restless, like caged animals in a menagerie. Men were playing at fives. Others pacing and tramping: this one in colloquy with his lawyer in dingy black—that one walking sadly, with his wife by his side, and a child on his arm. Some were arrayed in tattered dressing-gowns, and had a look of rakish fashion. Everybody seemed to be busy, humming, and on the move. Pen felt as if he choked in

the place, and as if the door being locked upon him they never would let him out.

They went through a court up a stone staircase, and through passages full of people, and noise, and cross lights, and black doors clapping and banging;—Pen feeling as one does in a feverish morning-dream. At last the same little runner who had brought Shandon's note, and had followed them down Fleet Street munching apples, and who showed the way to the two gentlemen through the prison, said, "This is the Captain's door," and Mr. Shandon's voice from within bade them enter.

The room, though bare, was not uncheerful. The sun was shining in at the window—near which sate a lady at work, who had been gay and beautiful once, but in whose faded face kindness and tenderness still beamed. Through all his errors and reckless mishaps and misfortunes, this faithful creature adored her husband, and thought him the best and cleverest, as indeed he was one of the kindest of men. Nothing ever seemed to disturb the sweetness of his temper; not debts; not duns: not misery: not the bottle: not his wife's unhappy position, or his children's ruined chances. He was perfectly fond of wife and children after his fashion: he always had the kindest words and smiles for them, and ruined them with the utmost sweetness of temper. He never could refuse himself or any man any enjoyment which his money could purchase; he would share his last guinea with Jack and Tom, and we may be sure he had a score of such retainers. He would sign his name at the back of any man's bill, and never pay any debt of his own. He would write on any side, and attack himself or another man with equal indifference. He was one of the wittiest, the most amiable, and the most incorrigible of Irishmen. Nobody could help liking Charley Shandon who saw him once, and those whom he ruined could scarcely be angry with him.

When Pen and Warrington arrived, the Captain (he had been in an Irish militia regiment once, and the title remained with him) was sitting on his bed in a torn dressing-gown, with a desk on his knees, at which he was scribbling as fast as his rapid pen could write. Slip after slip of paper fell off the desk wet on to the ground. A picture of his children was hung up over his bed, and the youngest of them was pattering about the room.

Opposite the Captain sate Mr. Bungay, a portly man of stolid countenance, with whom the little child had been trying a conversation.

"Papa's a very clever man," said she; "mamma says so."

"Oh, very," said Mr. Bungay.

"And you're a very rich man, Mr. Bundy," cried the child, who could hardly speak plain.

"Mary!" said Mamma, from her work.

"Oh, never mind," Bungay roared out with a great laugh; "no harm in saying I'm rich—he, he—I am pretty well off, my little dear."

"If you're rich, why don't you take papa out of piz'n?" asked the child.

Mamma at this began to wipe her eyes with the work on which she was employed. (The poor lady had hung curtains up in the room, had brought the children's picture and placed it there, and had made one or two attempts to ornament it.) Mamma began to cry; Mr. Bungay turned red, and looked fiercely out of his bloodshot little eyes; Shandon's pen went on, and Pen and Warrington arrived with their knock.

Captain Shandon looked up from his work. "How do you do, Mr. Warrington?" he said. "I'll speak to you in a minute. Please sit down, gentlemen, if you can find places," and away went the pen again.

Warrington pulled forward an old portmanteau—the only available seat—and sate down on it with a bow to Mrs. Shandon, and a nod to Bungay; the child came and looked at Pen solemnly; and in a couple of minutes the swift scribbling ceased; and Shandon, turning the desk over on the bed, stooped and picked up the papers.

"I think this will do," said he. "It's the prospectus for the 'Pall-Mall Gazette.'"

"And here's the money for it," Mr. Bungay said, laying down a five-pound note. "I'm as good as my word, I am. When I say I'll pay, I pay."

"Faith that's more than some of us can say," said Shandon, and he eagerly clapped the note into his pocket.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WHICH IS PASSED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF LUDGATE HILL.

UR imprisoned Captain announced, in smart and emphatic language in his prospectus, that the time had come at last when it was necessary for the gentlemen of England to band together in defence of their common rights and their glorious order, menaced on all sides by foreign revolutions, by intestine radicalism, by the artful calumnies of mill-owners and cotton-lords, and the stupid hostility of the masses whom they gulled and led. "The ancient monarchy was insulted," the Captain said, "by a ferocious republican rabble. The Church was deserted by envious dissent, and undermined by stealthy infidelity. The good institutions, which had made our country glorious, and the name of English Gentlemen the proudest in the world, were left without defence, and exposed to assault and contumely from men to whom no sanctuary was sacred, for they believed in nothing holy; no history venerable, for they were too ignorant to have heard of the past; and no law was binding which they were strong enough to break, when their leaders gave the signal for

plunder. It was because the kings of France mistrusted their gentlemen," Mr. Shandon remarked, "that the monarchy of Saint Louis went down: it was because the people of England still believed in their gentlemen, that this country encountered and overcame the greatest enemy a nation ever met: it was because we were headed by gentlemen that the Eagles retreated before us from the Douro to the Garonne: it was a gentleman who broke the line at Trafalgar, and swept the plain of Waterloo."

Bungay nodded his head in a knowing manner, and winked his eyes when the Captain came to the Waterloo passage: and Warrington burst out laughing.

"You see how our venerable friend Bungay is affected," Shandon said, slily looking up from his papers—"that's your true sort of test. I have used the Duke of Wellington and the battle of Waterloo a hundred times: and I never knew the Duke to fail."

The Captain then went on to confess, with much candour, that up to the present time the gentlemen of England, confident of their right, and careless of those who questioned it, had left the political interest of their order, as they did the management of their estates, or the settlement of their legal affairs, to persons affected to each peculiar service, and had permitted their interests to be represented in the press by professional proctors and advocates. That time Shandon professed to consider was now gone by: the gentlemen of England must be their own champions: the declared enemies of their order were brave, strong, numerous, and uncompromising. They must meet their foes in the field: they must not be belied and misrepresented by hireling advocates: they must not have Grub Street publishing Gazettes from Whitehall; "that's a dig at Bacon's people, Mr. Bungay," said Shandon, turning round to the publisher.

Bungay clapped his stick on the floor. "Hang him, pitch into him, Capting," he said with exultation: and turning to Warrington, wagged his dull head more vehemently than ever, and said, "For a slashing article, sir, there's nobody like the Capting—no-obody like him."

The prospectus-writer went on to say that some gentlemen, whose names were, for obvious reasons, not brought before the public (at which Mr. Warrington began to laugh again), had determined to bring forward a journal, of which the principles were so and so. "These men are proud of their order, and anxious to uphold it," cried out Captain Shandon, flourishing his paper with a grin. "They are loyal to their sovereign, by faithful conviction and ancestral allegiance;

they love their Church, where they would have their children worship, and for which their forefathers bled; they love their country, and would keep it what the gentlemen of England—yes, *the gentlemen of England* (we'll have that in large caps., Bungay, my boy) have made it—the greatest and freest in the world: and as the names of some of them are appended to the deed which secured our liberties at Runnymede—"

"What's that?" asked Mr. Bungay.

"An ancestor of mine sealed it with his sword hilt," Pen said, with great gravity.

"It's the Habeas Corpus, Mr. Bungay," Warrington said, on which the publisher answered, "All right, I dare say," and yawned, though he said, "Go on, Capting."

—"at Runnymede; they are ready to defend that freedom to-day with sword and pen, and now, as then, to rally round the old laws and liberties of England."

"Brayvo!" cried Warrington. The little child stood wondering; the lady was working silently, and looking with fond admiration. "Come here, little Mary," said Warrington, and patted the child's fair curls with his large hand. But she shrank back from his rough caress, and preferred to go and take refuge at Pen's knee, and play with his fine watch-chain: and Pen was very much pleased that she came to him; for he was very soft-hearted and simple, though he concealed his gentleness under a shy and pompous demeanour. So she clambered up on his lap whilst her father continued to read his programme.

"You were laughing," the Captain said to Warrington, "about 'the obvious reasons' which I mentioned. Now, I'll show ye what they are, ye unbelieving heathen. 'We have said,'" he went on, "'that we cannot give the names of the parties engaged in this undertaking, and that there were obvious reasons for that concealment. We number influential friends in both Houses of the Senate, and have secured allies in every diplomatic circle in Europe. Our sources of intelligence are such as cannot, by any possibility, be made public—and, indeed, such as no other London or European journal could, by any chance, acquire. But this we are free to say, that the very earliest information connected with the movement of English and Continental politics, will be found ONLY in the columns of the "Pall Mall Gazette." The Statesman and the Capitalist, the Country Gentleman, and the Divine, will be amongst our readers, because our writers are amongst them. We address ourselves to the higher circles of society: we care

not to disown it—the "Pall Mall Gazette" is written by gentlemen for gentlemen; its conductors speak to the classes in which they live and were born. The field-preacher has his journal, the radical free-thinker has his journal: why should the Gentlemen of England be unrepresented in the Press?'"

Mr. Shandon then went on with much modesty to descant upon the literary and fashionable departments of the "Pall Mall Gazette," which were to be conducted by gentlemen of acknowledged reputation; men famous at the Universities (at which Mr. Pendennis could scarcely help laughing and blushing), known at the Clubs and of the Society which they described. He pointed out delicately to advertisers that there would be no such medium as the "Pall Mall Gazette" for giving publicity to their sales; and he eloquently called upon the nobility of England, the baronetage of England, the revered clergy of England, the bar of England, the matrons, the daughters, the homes and hearths of England, to rally round the good old cause; and Bungay at the conclusion of the reading woke up from a second snooze in which he had indulged himself, and again said it was all right.

The reading of the prospectus concluded, the gentlemen present entered into some details regarding the political and literary management of the paper, and Mr. Bungay sate by listening and nodding his head, as if he understood what was the subject of their conversation, and approved of their opinions. Bungay's opinions, in truth, were pretty simple. He thought the Captain could write the best smashing article in England. He wanted the opposition house of Bacon smashed, and it was his opinion that the Captain could do that business. If the Captain had written a letter of Junius on a sheet of paper, or copied a part of the Church Catechism, Mr. Bungay would have been perfectly contented, and have considered that the article was a smashing article. And he pocketed the papers with the greatest satisfaction: and he not only paid for the MS., as we have seen, but he called little Mary to him, and gave her a penny as he went away.

The reading of the manuscript over, the party engaged in general conversation, Shandon leading with a jaunty fashionable air in compliment to the two guests who sate with him, and who, by their appearance and manner, he presumed to be persons of the *beau monde*. He knew very little indeed of the great world, but he had seen it, and made the most of what he had seen. He spoke of the characters of the day, and great personages of the fashion, with easy familiarity and jocular allusions, as if it was his habit to live amongst

them. He told anecdotes of their private life, and of conversations he had had, and entertainments at which he had been present, and at which such and such a thing occurred. Pen was amused to hear the shabby prisoner in a tattered dressing-gown talking glibly about the

great of the land. Mrs. Shandon was always delighted when her husband told these tales, and believed in them fondly every one. She did not want to mingle in the fashionable world herself, she was not clever enough; but the great Society was the very place for her Charles: he shone in it: he was respected in it. Indeed, Shandon

had once been asked to dinner by the Earl of X ; his wife treasured the invitation-card in her work-box at that very day.

Mr. Bungay presently had enough of this talk, and got up to take leave, whereupon Warrington and Pen rose to depart with the publisher, though the latter would have liked to stay to make a further acquaintance with this family, who interested him and touched him. He said something about hoping for permission to repeat his visit, upon which Shandon, with a rueful grin, said he was always to be found at home, and should be delighted to see Mr. Pennington.

"I ll see you to my park-gate, gentlemen," said Captain Shandon, seizing his hat in spite of a deprecatory look, and a faint cry of "Charles" from Mrs. Shandon. And the Captain, in shabby slippers, shuffled out before his guests, leading the way through the dismal passages of the prison. His hand was already fiddling with his waistcoat pocket, where Bungay's five-pound note was, as he took leave of the three gentlemen at the wicket ; one of them, Mr. Arthur Pendennis, being greatly relieved when he was out of the horrid place, and again freely treading the flags of Farringdon Street.

Mrs. Shandon sadly went on with her work at the window looking into the court. She saw Shandon with a couple of men at his heels run rapidly in the direction of the prison tavern. She had hoped to have had him to dinner herself that day : there was a piece of meat, and some salad in a basin, on the ledge outside of the window of their room which she had expected that she and little Mary were to share with the child's father. But there was no chance of that now. He would be in that tavern until the hours for closing it ; then he would go and play at cards or drink in some other man's room, and come back silent, with glazed eyes, reeling a little in his walk, that his wife might nurse him. Oh, what varieties of pain do we not make our women suffer !

So Mrs. Shandon went to the cupboard, and, in lieu of a dinner, made herself some tea. And in those varieties of pain of which we spoke anon, what a part of confidante has that poor tea-pot played ever since the kindly plant was introduced among us ! What myriads of women have cried over it, to be sure ! What sick beds it has smoked by ! What fevered lips have received refreshment from out of it ! Nature meant very gently by women when she made that tea-plant. With a little thought what a series of pictures and groups the fancy may conjure up and assemble round the tea-pot and cup. Melissa and Saccharissa are talking love secrets over it. Poor Polly

has it and her lover's letters upon the table; his letters who was her lover yesterday, and when it was with pleasure, not despair, she wept over them. Mary comes tripping noiselessly into her mother's bedroom, bearing a cup of the consoler to the widow who will take no other food. Ruth is busy concocting it for her husband, who is coming home from the harvest field—one could fill a page with hints for such pictures;—finally, Mrs. Shandon and little Mary sit down and drink their tea together, while the Captain goes out and takes his pleasure. She cares for nothing else but that, when her husband is away.

A gentleman with whom we are already slightly acquainted, Mr. Jack Finucane, a townsman of Captain Shandon's, found the Captain's wife and little Mary (for whom Jack always brought a sweetmeat in his pocket) over this meal. Jack thought Shandon the greatest of created geniuses, had had one or two helps from the good-natured prodigal, who had always a kind word, and sometimes a guinea for any friend in need; and never missed a day in seeing his patron. He was ready to run Shandon's errands and transact his money-business with publishers and newspaper editors, duns, creditors, holders of Shandon's acceptances, gentlemen disposed to speculate in those securities, and to transact the thousand little affairs of an embarrassed Irish gentleman. I never knew an embarrassed Irish gentleman yet, but he had an aide-de-camp of his own nation, likewise in circumstances of pecuniary discomfort. That aide-de-camp has subordinates of his own, who again may have other insolvent dependents—all through his life our Captain marched at the head of a ragged staff, who shared in the rough fortunes of their chieftain.

"He won't have that five-pound note very long, I bet a guinea," Mr. Bungay said of the Captain, as he and his two companions walked away from the prison; and the publisher judged rightly, for when Mrs. Shandon came to empty her husband's pockets, she found but a couple of shillings, and a few half-pence out of the morning's remittance. Shandon had given a pound to one follower; had sent a leg of mutton and potatoes and beer to an acquaintance in the poor side of the prison; had paid an outstanding bill at the tavern where he had changed his five-pound note; had had a dinner with two friends there, to whom he lost sundry half-crowns at cards afterwards; so that the night left him as poor as the morning had found him.

The publisher and the two gentlemen had had some talk together after quitting Shandon, and Warrington reiterated to Bungay what he had said to his rival, Bacon, viz., that Pen was a high fellow, of great

genius, and what was more, well with the great world, and related to "no end" of the peerage. Bungay replied that he should be happy to have dealings with Mr. Pendennis, and hoped to have the pleasure of seeing both gents to cut mutton with him before long, and so, with mutual politeness and protestations, they parted.

"It is hard to see such a man as Shandon," Pen said, musing, and talking that night over the sight which he had witnessed, "of accomplishments so multifarious, and of such an undoubted talent and humour, an inmate of a gaol for half his time, and a bookseller's hanger-on when out of prison."

"I am a bookseller's hanger-on—you are going to try your paces as a hack," Warrington said with a laugh. "We are all hacks upon some road or other. I would rather be myself, than Paley our neighbour in chambers: who has as much enjoyment of his life as a mole. A deuced deal of undeserved compassion has been thrown away upon what you call your bookseller's drudge."

"Much solitary pipes and ale make a cynic of you," Pen said. "You are a Diogenes by a beer-barrel, Warrington. No man shall tell me that a man of genius, as Shandon is, ought to be driven by such a vulgar slave-driver as yonder Mr. Bungay, whom we have just left, who fattens on the profits of the other's brains, and enriches himself out of his journeyman's labour. It makes me indignant to see a gentleman the serf of such a creature as that, of a man who can't speak the language that he lives by, who is not fit to black Shandon's boots."

"So you have begun already to gird at the publishers, and to take your side amongst our order. Bravo, Pen, my boy!" Warrington answered, laughing still. "What have you got to say against Bungay's relations with Shandon? Was it the publisher, think you, who sent the author to prison? Is it Bungay who is tippling away the five-pound note which we saw just now, or Shandon?"

"Misfortune drives a man into bad company," Pen said. "It is easy to cry 'Fie!' against a poor fellow who has no society but such as he finds in a prison; and no resource except forgetfulness and the bottle. We must deal kindly with the eccentricities of genius, and remember that the very ardour and enthusiasm of temperament which makes the author delightful often leads the man astray."

"A fiddlestick about men of genius!" Warrington cried out, who was a very severe moralist upon some points, though possibly a very *bad practitioner*. "I deny that there are so many geniuses as people

who whimper about the fate of men of letters assert there are. There are thousands of clever fellows in the world who could, if they would, turn verses, write articles, read books, and deliver a judgment upon them; the talk of professional critics and writers is not a whit more brilliant, or profound, or amusing, than that of any other society of educated people. If a lawyer, or a soldier, or a parson, outruns his income, and does not pay his bills, he must go to gaol; and an author must go, too. If an author fuddles himself, I don't know why he should be let off a headache the next morning,—if he orders a coat from the tailor's, why he shouldn't pay for it."

"I would give him more money to buy coats," said Pen, smiling. "I suppose I should like to belong to a well-dressed profession. I protest against that wretch of a middle-man whom I see between Genius and his great landlord, the Public, and who stops more than half of the labourer's earnings and fame."

"I am a prose labourer," Warrington said: "you, my boy, are a poet in a small way, and so, I suppose, consider you are authorised to be flighty. What is it you want? Do you want a body of capitalists that shall be forced to purchase the works of all authors, who may present themselves, manuscript in hand? Everybody who writes his epic, every driveller who can or can't spell, and produces his novel or his tragedy,—are they all to come and find a bag of sovereigns in exchange for their worthless reams of paper? Who is to settle what is good or bad, saleable or otherwise? Will you give the buyer leave, in fine, to purchase or not? Why, sir, when Johnson sate behind the screen at Saint John's Gate, and took his dinner apart, because he was too shabby and poor to join the literary bigwigs who were regaling themselves round Mr. Cave's best table cloth, the tradesman was doing him no wrong. You couldn't force the publisher to recognise the man of genius in the young man who presented himself before him, ragged, gaunt, and hungry. Rags are not a proof of genius; whereas capital is absolute, as times go, and is perforce the bargain-master. It has a right to deal with the literary inventor as with any other;—if I produce a novelty in the book trade, I must do the best I can with it; but I can no more force Mr. Murray to purchase my book of travels or sermons, than I can compel Mr. Tattersall to give me a hundred guineas for my horse. I may have my own ideas of the value of my Pegasus and think him the most wonderful of animals; but the dealer has a right to his opinion, too, and may want a lady's horse, or a cob for a heavy timid rider, or a sound hack for the road, and my beast won't suit him."

"You deal in metaphors, Warrington," Pen said; "but you rightly say that you are very prosaic. Poor Shandon! There is something about the kindness of that man, and the gentleness of that sweet creature of a wife, which touches me profoundly. I like him, I am afraid, better than a better man."

"And so do I," Warrington said. "Let us give him the benefit of our sympathy, and the pity that is due to his weakness: though I fear that sort of kindness would be resented as contempt by a more high-minded man. You see he takes his consolation along with his misfortune, and one generates the other or balances it, as is the way of the world. He is a prisoner, but he is not unhappy."

"His genius sings within his prison bars," Pen said.

"Yes," Warrington said, bitterly; "Shandon accommodates himself to a cage pretty well. He ought to be wretched, but he has Jack and Tom to drink with, and that consoles him: he might have a high place, but, as he can't, why he can drink with Tom and Jack;—he might be providing for his wife and children, but Thomas and John have got a bottle of brandy which they want him to taste;—he might pay poor Snip, the tailor, the twenty pounds which the poor devil wants for his landlord, but John and Thomas lay their hands upon his purse;—and so he drinks whilst his tradesman goes to gaol and his family to ruin. Let us pity the misfortunes of genius, and conspire against the publishing tyrants who oppress men of letters."

"What! are you going to have another glass of brandy-and-water?" Pen said, with a humorous look. It was at the Back Kitchen that the above philosophical conversation took place between the two young men.

Warrington began to laugh as usual. "*Video meliora proboque*—I mean, bring it me hot, with sugar, John," he said to the waiter.

"I would have some more, too, only I don't want it," said Pen. "It does not seem to me, Warrington, that we are much better than our neighbours." And Warrington's last glass having been dispatched, the pair returned to their chambers.

They found a couple of notes in the letter-box, on their return, which had been sent by their acquaintance of the morning, Mr. Bungay. That hospitable gentleman presented his compliments to each of the gentlemen, and requested the pleasure of their company at dinner on an early day, to meet a few literary friends.

"We shall have a grand spread," said Warrington. "We shall meet all Bungay's corps."

"*All* except poor Shandon," said Pen, nodding a good-night to his

friend, and he went into his own little room. The events and acquaintances of the day had excited him a good deal, and he lay for some time awake thinking over them, as Warrington's vigorous and regular snore from the neighbouring apartment pronounced that that gentleman was engaged in deep slumber.

Is it true, thought Pendennis, lying on his bed and gazing at a bright moon without, that lighted up a corner of his dressing-table, and the frame of a little sketch of Fairoaks drawn by Laura, that hung over his drawers—is it true that I am going to earn my bread at last, and with my pen? that I shall impoverish the dear mother no longer; and that I may gain a name and reputation in the world, perhaps? These are welcome if they come, thought the young visionary, laughing and blushing to himself, though alone and in the night, as he thought how dearly he would relish honour and fame if they could be his. If fortune favours me, I laud her; if she frowns, I resign her. I pray Heaven I may be honest if I fail, or if I succeed. I pray Heaven I may tell the truth as far as I know it: that I mayn't swerve from it through flattery, or interest, or personal enmity, or party prejudice. Dearest old mother, what a pride will you have, if I can do anything worthy of our name! and you, Laura, you won't scorn me as the worthless idler and spendthrift, when you see that I—when I have achieved a—psha! what an Alnaschar I am because I have made five pounds by my poems, and am engaged to write half a dozen articles for a newspaper. He went on with these musings, more happy and hopeful, and in a humbler frame of mind, than he had felt to be for many a day. He thought over the errors and idleness, the passions, extravagances, disappointments, of his wayward youth: he got up from the bed: threw open the window, and looked out into the night: and then, by some impulse, which we hope was a good one, he went up and kissed the picture of Fairoaks, and flinging himself down on his knees by the bed, remained for some time in that posture of hope and submission. When he rose, it was with streaming eyes. He had found himself repeating, mechanically, some little words which he had been accustomed to repeat as a child at his mother's side, after the saying of which she would softly take him to his bed and close the curtains round him, hushing him with a benediction.

The next day, Mr. Pidgeon, their attendant, brought in a large brown paper parcel, directed to G. Warrington, Esq., with Mr. Trotter's compliments, and a note which Warrington read.

"Pen, you beggar!" roared Warrington to Pen, who was in his own room.

"Hullo!" sung out Pen.

"Come here, you're wanted," cried the other, and Pen came out. "What is it?" said he.

"*Catch!*" cried Warrington, and flung the parcel at Pen's head, who would have been knocked down had he not caught it.

"It's books for review for the 'Pall Mall Gazette;' pitch into 'em," Warrington said. As for Pen, he had never been so delighted in his life: his hand trembled as he cut the string of the packet, and beheld within a smart set of new neat calico-bound books, travels, and novels, and poems.

"Sport the oak, Pidgeon," said he. "I'm not at home to anybody to-day." And he flung into his easy-chair, and hardly gave himself time to drink his tea, so eager was he to begin to read and to review.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN WHICH THE HISTORY STILL HOVERS ABOUT FLEET STREET.

CAPTAIN SHANDON, urged on by his wife, who seldom meddled in business matters, had stipulated that John Finucane, Esquire, of the Upper Temple, should be appointed sub-editor of the forthcoming "Pall Mall Gazette," and this post was accordingly conferred upon Mr. Finucane by the spirited proprietor of the Journal. Indeed he deserved any kindness at the hands of Shandon, so fondly attached was he, as we have said, to the Captain and his family, and so eager to do him a service. It was in Finucane's chambers that Shandon used in former days to hide when danger was near and bailiffs abroad: until at length his hiding-place was known, and the sheriff's officers came as regularly to wait for the Captain on Finucane's staircase as at his own door. It was to Finucane's chambers that poor Mrs. Shandon came often and often to explain her troubles and griefs, and devise means of rescue for her adored Captain. Many a meal did Finucane furnish for her and the child there. It was an honour to his little rooms to be visited by such a lady; and as she went down the staircase with her veil over her face, Fin would lean over the balustrade looking after her, to see that no Temple Lovelace assailed her upon the road, perhaps hoping that some rogue might be induced to waylay her, so that he, Fin, might have the pleasure of rushing to her rescue, and breaking the rascal's bones. It was a sincere pleasure to Mrs. Shandon when the arrangements were made by which her kind honest champion was appointed her husband's aide-de-camp in the newspaper.

He would have sate with Mrs. Shandon as late as the prison hours permitted, and had indeed many a time witnessed the putting to bed of little Mary, who occupied a crib in the room; and to whose evening prayers that God might bless papa, Finucane, although of the Romish faith himself, had said Amen with a great deal of sympathy—

but he had an appointment with Mr. Bungay regarding the affairs of the paper which they were to discuss over a quiet dinner. So he went away at six o'clock from Mrs. Shandon, but made his accustomed appearance at the Fleet Prison next morning, having arrayed himself in his best clothes and ornaments, which, though cheap as to cost, were very brilliant as to colour and appearance, and having in his pocket four pounds two shillings, being the amount of his week's salary at the "Daily Journal," minus two shillings expended by him in the purchase of a pair of gloves on his way to the prison.

He had cut his mutton with Mr. Bungay, as the latter gentleman phrased it, and Mr. Trotter, Bungay's reader and literary man of business, at Dick's Coffee-House on the previous day, and entered at large into his views respecting the conduct of the "Pall Mall Gazette." In a masterly manner he had pointed out what should be the sub-editorial arrangements of the paper: what should be the type for the various articles: who should report the markets; who the turf and ring; who the Church intelligence; and who the fashionable chit-chat. He was acquainted with gentlemen engaged in cultivating these various departments of knowledge, and in communicating them afterwards to the public—in fine, Jack Finucane was, as Shandon had said of him, and, as he proudly owned himself to be, one of the best sub-editors of a paper in London. He knew the weekly earnings of every man connected with the Press, and was up to a thousand dodges, or ingenious economic contrivances, by which money could be saved to spirited capitalists, who were going to set up a paper. He at once dazzled and mystified Mr. Bungay, who was slow of comprehension, by the rapidity of the calculations which he exhibited on paper, as they sate in the box. And Bungay afterwards owned to his subordinate Mr. Trotter, that that Irishman seemed a clever fellow.

And now having succeeded in making this impression upon Mr. Bungay, the faithful fellow worked round to the point which he had very near at heart, viz., the liberation from prison of his admired friend and chief, Captain Shandon. He knew to a shilling the amount of the detainers which were against the Captain at the porter's lodge of the Fleet; and, indeed, professed to know all his debts, though this was impossible, for no man in England, certainly not the Captain himself, was acquainted with them. He pointed out what Shandon's engagements already were; and how much better he would work if removed from confinement (though this Mr. Bungay denied, for, "when the Captain's locked up," he said, "we are sure to find him at home; whereas, when he's free, you can never catch hold of him");

finally, he so worked on Mr. Bungay's feelings, by describing Mrs. Shandon pining away in the prison, and the child sickening there, that the publisher was induced to promise that, if Mrs. Shandon would come to him in the morning, he would see what could be done. And the colloquy ending at this time with the second round of brandy and water, although Finucane, who had four guineas in his pocket, would have discharged the tavern reckoning with delight, Bungay said, "No, sir,—this is my affair, sir, if you please. James, take the bill, and eighteenpence for yourself," and he handed over the necessary funds to the waiter. Thus it was that Finucane, who went to bed at the Temple after the dinner at Dick's, found himself actually with his week's salary intact upon Saturday morning.

He gave Mrs. Shandon a wink so knowing and joyful, that that kind creature knew some good news was in store for her, and hastened to get her bonnet and shawl, when Fin asked if he might have the honour of taking her a walk, and giving her a little fresh air. And little Mary jumped for joy at the idea of this holiday, for Finucane never neglected to give her a toy, or to take her to a show, and brought newspaper orders in his pocket for all sorts of London diversions to amuse the child. Indeed, he loved them with all his heart, and would cheerfully have dashed out his rambling brains to do them, or his adored Captain, a service.

"May I go, Charley? or shall I stay with you, for you're poorly, dear, this morning? He's got a headache, Mr. Finucane. He suffers from headaches, and I persuaded him to stay in bed," Mrs. Shandon said.

"Go along with you, and Polly. Jack, take care of 'em. Hand me over the Burton's Anatomy, and leave me to my abominable devices," Shandon said, with perfect good-humour. He was writing, and not uncommonly took his Greek and Latin quotations (of which he knew the use as a public writer) from that wonderful repertory of learning.

So Fin gave his arm to Mrs. Shandon, and Mary went skipping down the passages of the prison, and through the gate into the free air. From Fleet Street to Paternoster Row is not very far. As the three reached Mr. Bungay's shop, Mrs. Bungay was also entering at the private door, holding in her hand a paper parcel and a manuscript volume bound in red, and, indeed, containing an account of her transactions with the butcher in the neighbouring market. Mrs. Bungay was in a gorgeous shot silk dress, which flamed with red and purple; she wore a yellow shawl, and had red flowers inside her bonnet, and a

brilliant light blue parasol. Mrs. Shandon was in an old black watered silk; her bonnet had never seen very brilliant days of prosperity any more than its owner, but she could not help looking like a lady whatever her attire was. The two women curtsied to each other, each according to her fashion.

"I hope you're pretty well, Mum?" said Mrs. Bungay.

"It's a very fine day," said Mrs. Shandon.

"Won't you step in, Mum?" said Mrs. Bungay, looking so hard at the child as almost to frighten her.

"I—I came about business with Mr. Bungay—I—I hope he's pretty well?" said timid Mrs. Shandon.

"If you go to see him in the counting-house, couldn't you—couldn't you leave your little *gurl* with me?" said Mrs. Bungay, in a deep voice, and with a tragic look, as she held out one finger towards the child.

"I want to stay with mamma," cried little Mary, burying her face in her mother's dress.

"Go with this lady, Mary, my dear," said the mother.

"I'll show you some pretty pictures," said Mrs. Bungay, with the voice of an ogress, "and some nice things besides; look here"—and opening her brown paper parcel, Mrs. Bungay displayed some choice sweet biscuits, such as her Bungay loved after his wine. Little Mary followed after this attraction, the whole party entering at the private entrance, from which a side door led into Mr. Bungay's commercial apartments. Here, however, as the child was about to part from her mother, her courage again failed her, and again she ran to the maternal petticoat; upon which the kind and gentle Mrs. Shandon, seeing the look of disappointment in Mrs. Bungay's face, good-naturedly said, "If you will let me, I will come up too, and sit for a few minutes," and so the three females ascended the stairs together. A second biscuit charmed little Mary into perfect confidence, and in a minute or two she prattled away without the least restraint.

Faithful Finucane meanwhile found Mr. Bungay in a severer mood than he had been on the night previous, when two-thirds of a bottle of port, and two large glasses of brandy and water, had warmed his soul into enthusiasm, and made him generous in his promises towards Captain Shandon. His impetuous wife had rebuked him on his return home. She had ordered that he should give no relief to the Captain; he was a good-for-nothing fellow, whom no money would help; she disapproved of the plan of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and expected that Bungay would only lose his money in it as they were losing over the way (she always called her brother's establishment "over the way,") by the "Whitehall Journal." Let Shandon stop in prison and do his work; it was the best place for him. In vain Finucane pleaded and promised and implored, for his friend Bungay had had an hour's lecture in the morning and was inexorable.

But what honest Jack failed to do below stairs in the counting-house, the pretty faces and manners of the mother and child were effecting in the drawing-room, where they were melting the fierce but really soft Mrs. Bungay. There was an artless sweetness in Mrs.

Shandon's voice, and a winning frankness of manner, which made most people fond of her, and pity her: and taking courage by the rugged kindness with which her hostess received her, the Captain's lady told her story, and described her husband's goodness and virtues, and her child's failing health (she was obliged to part with two of them, she said, and send them to school, for she could not have them in that horrid place)—that Mrs. Bungay, though as grim as Lady Macbeth, melted under the influence of the simple tale, and said she would go down and speak to Bungay. Now in this household to speak was to command, with Mrs. Bungay; and with Bungay, to hear was to obey.

It was just when poor Finucane was in despair about his negotiation, that the majestic Mrs. Bungay descended upon her spouse, politely requested Mr. Finucane to step up to his friends in her drawing-room, while she held a few minutes' conversation with Mr. B., and when the pair were alone the publisher's better half informed him of her intentions towards the Captain's lady.

"What's in the wind now, my dear?" Mæcenas asked, surprised at his wife's altered tone. "You wouldn't hear of my doing anything for the Captain this morning: I wonder what has been a changing of you."

"The Capting is an Irishman," Mrs. Bungay replied; "and those Irish I have always said I couldn't abide. But his wife is a lady, as any one can see; and a good woman, and a clergyman's daughter, and a West of England woman, B., which I am myself, by my mother's side—and, O Marmaduke, didn't you remark her little gurl?"

"Yes, Mrs. B. I saw the little girl."

"And didn't you see how like she was to our angel, Bessy, Mr. B.?"—and Mrs. Bungay's thoughts flew back to a period eighteen years back, when Bacon and Bungay had just set up in business as small booksellers in a country town, and when she had had a child, named Bessy, something like the little Mary who had just moved her compassion.

"Well, well, my dear," Mr. Bungay said, seeing the little eyes of his wife begin to twinkle and grow red; "the Captain ain't in for much. There's only a hundred and thirty pound against him. Half the money will take him out of the Fleet, Finucane says, and we'll pay him half salaries till he has made the account square. When the little 'un said, 'Why don't you take Par out of pizn?' I did feel it, Flora, upon my honour I did, now." And the upshot of this conversation was, that Mr. and Mrs. Bungay both ascended to the

drawing-room, and Mr. Bungay made a heavy and clumsy speech, in which he announced to Mrs. Shandon, that, hearing sixty-five pounds would set her husband free, he was ready to advance that sum of money, deducting it from the Captain's salary, and that he would give it to her on condition that she would personally settle with the creditors regarding her husband's liberation.

I think this was the happiest day that Mrs. Shandon and Mr. Finucane had had for a long time. "Bedad, Bungay, you're a trump!" roared out Fin, in an overpowering brogue and emotion. "Give us your fist, old boy: and won't we send the 'Pall Mall Gazette' up to ten thousand a-week, that's all!" and he jumped about the room, and tossed up little Mary, with a hundred frantic antics.

"If I could drive you anywhere in my carriage, Mrs. Shandon—I'm sure it's quite at your service," Mrs. Bungay said, looking out at a one-horsed vehicle which had just driven up, and in which this lady took the air considerably—and the two ladies, with little Mary between them (whose tiny hand Mæcenas's wife kept fixed in her great grasp), with the delighted Mr. Finucane on the back seat, drove away from Paternoster Row, as the owner of the vehicle threw triumphant glances at the opposite windows at Bacon's.

"It won't do the Captain any good," thought Bungay, going back to his desk and accounts, "but Mrs. B. becomes reglar upset when she thinks about her misfortune. The child would have been of age yesterday, if she'd lived. Bessy told me so:" and he wondered how women did remember things.

We are happy to say that Mrs. Shandon sped with very good success upon her errand. She who had had to mollify creditors when she had no money at all, and only tears and entreaties wherewith to soothe them, found no difficulty in making them relent by means of a bribe of ten shillings in the pound; and the next Sunday was the last, for some time at least, which the Captain spent in prison.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A DINNER IN THE ROW.

UPON the appointed day our two friends made their appearance at Mr. Bungay's door in Paternoster Row; not the public entrance through which booksellers' boys issued with their sacks full of Bungay's volumes, and around which timid aspirants lingered with their virgin manuscripts ready for sale to Sultan Bungay, but at the private door of the house, whence the splendid Mrs. Bungay would come forth to step into her chaise and take her drive, settling herself on the cushions, and casting looks of defiance at Mrs. Bacon's opposite windows—at Mrs. Bacon, who was as yet a chaiseless woman.

On such occasions, when very much wroth at her sister-in-law's splendour, Mrs. Bacon would fling up the sash of her drawing-room window, and look out with her four children at the chaise, as much as to say, "Look at these four darlings, Flora Bungay! This is why I can't drive in my carriage; you would give a coach and four to have the same reason." And it was with these arrows out of her quiver that Emma Bacon shot Flora Bungay as she sate in her chariot envious and childless.

As Pen and Warrington came to Bungay's door, a carriage and a cab drove up to Bacon's. Old Dr. Slocum descended heavily from the first; the Doctor's equipage was as ponderous as his style, but both had a fine sonorous effect upon the publishers in the Row. A couple of dazzling white waistcoats stepped out of the cab.

Warrington laughed. "You see Bacon has his dinner party too.

That is Dr. Slocum, author of 'Memoirs of the Poisoners.' You would hardly have recognised our friend Hoolan in that gallant white waistcoat. Doolan is one of Bungay's men, and faith, here he comes." Indeed Messrs. Hoolan and Doolan had come from the Strand in the same cab, tossing up by the way which should pay the shilling; and Mr. D. stepped from the other side of the way, arrayed in black, with a large pair of white gloves which were spread out on his hands, and which the owner could not help regarding with pleasure.

The house porter in an evening coat, and gentlemen with gloves as large as Doolan's, but of the famous Berlin web, were on the passage of Mr. Bungay's house to receive the guest's hats and coats, and bawl their names up the stair. Some of the latter had arrived when the three new visitors made their appearance; but there was only Mrs. Bungay, in red satin and a turban, to represent her own charming sex. She made curtsies to each new comer as he entered the drawing-room, but her mind was evidently pre-occupied by extraneous thoughts. The fact is, Mrs. Bacon's dinner party was disturbing her, and as soon as she had received each individual of her own company, Flora Bungay flew back to the embrasure of the window, whence she could rake the carriages of Emma Bacon's friends as they came rattling up the Row. The sight of Dr. Slocum's large carriage, with the gaunt job-horses, crushed Flora: none but hack cabs had driven up to her own door on that day.

They were all literary gentlemen, though unknown as yet to Pen. There was Mr. Bole, the real editor of the magazine of which Mr. Wagg was the nominal chief; Mr. Trotter, who, from having broken out on the world as a poet of a tragic and suicidal cast, had now subsided into one of Mr. Bungay's back shops as reader for that gentleman; and Captain Sumph, an ex-beau still about town, and related in some indistinct manner to Literature and the Peerage. He was said to have written a book once, to have been a friend of Lord Byron, to be related to Lord Sumphington; in fact, anecdotes of Byron formed his staple, and he seldom spoke but with the name of that poet or some of his contemporaries in his mouth, as thus: "I remember poor Shelley at school being sent up for good for a copy of verses, every line of which I wrote, by Jove;" or, "I recollect, when I was at Missolonghi with Byron, offering to bet Gamba," and so forth. This gentleman, Pen remarked, was listened to with great attention by Mrs. Bungay; his anecdotes of the aristocracy, of which he was a middle-aged member, delighted the publisher's lady; and he was almost a greater man than the great Mr. Wagg himself

in her eyes. Had he but come in his own carriage, Mrs. Bungay would have made her Bungay purchase any given volume from his pen.

Mr. Bungay went about to his guests as they arrived, and did the honours of his house with much cordiality. "How are you, sir? Fine day, sir. Glad to see you year, sir. Flora, my love, let me ave the honour of introducing Mr. Warrington to you. Mr. Warrington, Mrs. Bungay; Mr. Pendennis, Mrs. Bungay. Hope you've brought good appetites with you, gentlemen. *You*, Doolan, I know ave, for you've always ad a deuce of a twist."

"Lor, Bungay!" said Mrs. Bungay.

"Faith, a man must be hard to please, Bungay, who can't eat a good dinner in *this* house," Doolan said, and he winked and stroked his lean chops with his large gloves; and made appeals of friendship to Mrs. Bungay, which that honest woman refused with scorn from the timid man. "She couldn't abide that Doolan," she said in confidence to her friends. Indeed, all his flatteries failed to win her.

As they talked, Mrs. Bungay surveying mankind from her window, a magnificent vision of an enormous grey cab-horse appeared, and neared rapidly. A pair of white reins, held by small white gloves, were visible behind it; a face pale, but richly decorated with a chin-tuft, the head of an exiguous groom bobbing over the cab-head—these bright things were revealed to the delighted Mrs. Bungay. "The Honourable Percy Popjoy's quite punctual, I declare," she said, and sailed to the door to be in waiting at the nobleman's arrival.

"It's Percy Popjoy," said Pen, looking out of window, and seeing an individual in extremely lacquered boots, descend from the swinging cab: and, in fact, it was that young nobleman—Lord Falconet's eldest son, as we all very well know, who was come to dine with the publisher—his publisher of the Row.

"He was my fag at Eton," Warrington said. "I ought to have licked him a little more." He and Pen had had some bouts at the Oxbridge Union debates, in which Pen had had very much the better of Percy: who presently appeared, with his hat under his arm, and a look of indescribable good humour and fatuity in his round dimpled face, upon which Nature had burst out with a chin-tuft, but, exhausted with the effort, had left the rest of the countenance bare of hair.

The temporary groom of the chambers bawled out, "The Honourable Percy Popjoy," much to that gentleman's discomposure at hearing his titles announced.

"What did the man want to take away my hat for, Bungay?" he asked of the publisher. "Can't do without my hat—want it to make my bow to Mrs. Bungay. How well you look, Mrs. Bungay, to-day. Haven't seen your carriage in the Park: why haven't you been there? I missed you; indeed, I did."

"I'm afraid you're a sad quiz," said Mrs. Bungay.

"Quiz! Never made a joke in my—hullo! who's here? How d'ye do, Pendennis? How d'ye do, Warrington? These are old friends of mine, Mrs. Bungay. I say, how the doose did *you* come here?" he asked of the two young men, turning his lacquered heels upon Mrs. Bungay, who respected her husband's two young guests, now that she found they were intimate with a lord's son.

"What! do *they* know him?" she asked rapidly of Mr. B.

"High fellers, I tell you—the young one related to all the nobility," said the publisher; and both ran forward, smiling and bowing, to greet almost as great personages as the young lord—no less characters, indeed, than the great Mr. Wenham and the great Mr. Wagg, who were now announced.

Mr. Wenham entered, wearing the usual demure look and stealthy smile with which he commonly surveyed the tips of his neat little shining boots, and which he but seldom brought to bear upon the person who addressed him. Wagg's white waistcoat, spread out, on the contrary, with profuse brilliancy; his burly, red face shone resplendent over it, lighted up with the thoughts of good jokes and a good dinner. He liked to make his *entrée* into a drawing-room with a laugh, and, when he went away at night, to leave a joke exploding behind him. No personal calamities or distresses (of which that humourist had his share in common with the unjocular part of mankind) could altogether keep his humour down. Whatever his griefs might be, the thought of a dinner rallied his great soul; and when he saw a lord, he saluted him with a pun.

Wenham went up, then, with a smug smile and whisper, to Mrs. Bungay, and looked at her from under his eyes, and showed her the tips of his shoes. Wagg said she looked charming, and pushed on straight at the young nobleman, whom he called Pop; and to whom he instantly related a funny story, seasoned with what the French call *gros sel*. He was delighted to see Pen, too, and shook hands with him, and slapped him on the back cordially; for he was full of spirits and good-humour. And he talked in a loud voice about their last place and occasion of meeting at Baymouth; and asked how their friends of Clavering Park were, and whether Sir Francis was not

coming to London for the season; and whether Pen had been to see Lady Rockminster, who had arrived—fine old lady, Lady Rockminster! These remarks Wagg made not for Pen's ear so much as for the edification of the company, whom he was glad to inform that he paid visits to gentlemen's country seats, and was on intimate terms with the nobility.

Wenham also shook hands with our young friend—all of which scenes Mrs. Bungay remarked with respectful pleasure, and communicated her ideas to Bungay, afterwards, regarding the importance of Mr. Pendennis—ideas by which Pen profited much more than he was aware.

Pen, who had read, and rather admired some of her works (and expected to find in Miss Bunion a person somewhat resembling her own description of herself in the "Passion-Flowers," in which she stated that her youth resembled—

> "A violet, shrinking meanly
> When blows the March wind keenly;
> A timid fawn, on wild-wood lawn,
> Where oak-boughs rustle greenly,—"

and that her maturer beauty was something very different, certainly, to the artless loveliness of her prime, but still exceedingly captivating and striking), beheld, rather to his surprise and amusement, a large and bony woman in a crumpled satin dress, who came creaking into the room with a step as heavy as a grenadier's. Wagg instantly noted the straw which she brought in at the rumpled skirt of her dress, and would have stooped to pick it up, but Miss Bunion disarmed all criticism by observing this ornament herself, and, putting down her own large foot upon it, so as to separate it from her robe, she stooped and picked up the straw, saying to Mrs. Bungay, that she was very sorry to be a little late, but that the omnibus was very slow, and what a comfort it was to get a ride all the way from Brompton for sixpence. Nobody laughed at the poetess's speech, it was uttered so simply. Indeed, the worthy woman had not the least notion of being ashamed of an action incidental upon her poverty.

"Is that 'Passion-Flowers?'" Pen said to Wenham, by whom he was standing. "Why, her picture in the volume represents her as a very well-looking young woman."

"You know passion-flowers, like all others, will run to seed," Wenham said; "Miss Bunion's portrait was probably painted some years ago."

"Well, I like her for not being ashamed of her poverty."

"So do I," said Mr. Wenham, who would have starved rather than have come to dinner in an omnibus; "but I don't think that she need flourish the straw about, do you, Mr. Pendennis? My dear Miss Bunion, how do you do? I was in a great lady's drawing-room this morning, and everybody was charmed with your new volume. Those lines on the christening of Lady Fanny Fantail brought tears into the Duchess's eyes. I said that I thought I should have the pleasure of meeting you to-day, and she begged me to thank you, and say how greatly she was pleased.

This history, told in a bland, smiling manner, of a Duchess whom Wenham had met that very morning, too, quite put poor Wagg's dowager and baronet out of court, and placed Wenham beyond Wagg as a man of fashion. Wenham kept this inestimable advantage, and having the conversation to himself, ran on with a number of anecdotes regarding the aristocracy. He tried to bring Mr. Popjoy into the conversation by making appeals to him, and saying, "I was telling your father this morning," or, "I think you were present at W. house the other night when the Duke said so and so," but Mr. Popjoy would not gratify him by joining in the talk, preferring to fall back into the window recess with Mrs. Bungay, and watch the cabs that drove up to the opposite door. At least, if he would not talk, the hostess hoped that those odious Bacons would see how she had secured the noble Percy Popjoy for her party.

And now the bell of Saint Paul's tolled half an hour later than that for which Mr. Bungay had invited his party, and it was complete with the exception of two guests, who at last made their appearance, and in whom Pen was pleased to recognise Captain and Mrs. Shandon.

When these two had made their greetings to the master and mistress of the house, and exchanged nods of more or less recognition with most of the people present, Pen and Warrington went up and shook hands very warmly with Mrs. Shandon, who, perhaps, was affected to meet them, and think where it was she had seen them but a few days before. Shandon was brushed up, and looked pretty smart, in a red velvet waistcoat, and a frill, into which his wife had stuck her best brooch. In spite of Mrs. Bungay's kindness, perhaps in consequence of it, Mrs. Shandon felt great terror and timidity in approaching her: indeed, she was more awful than ever in her red satin and bird of paradise, and it was not until she had asked in her

great voice about the dear little gurl, that the latter was somewhat encouraged, and ventured to speak.

"Nice-looking woman," Popjoy whispered to Warrington. "Do introduce me to Captain Shandon, Warrington. I'm told he's a tremendous clever fellow; and, dammy, I adore intellect, by Jove I do!" This was the truth: Heaven had not endowed young Mr. Popjoy with much intellect of his own, but had given him a generous faculty for admiring, if not for appreciating, the intellect of others. "And introduce me to Miss Bunion. I'm told she's very clever too. She's rum to look at, certainly, but that don't matter. Dammy, I consider myself a literary man, and I wish to know all the clever fellows." So Mr. Popjoy and Mr. Shandon had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with one another; and now the doors of the adjoining dining-room being flung open, the party entered and took their seats at table. Pen found himself next to Miss Bunion on one side, and to Mr. Wagg —the truth is, Wagg fled alarmed from the vacant place by the poetess, and Pen was compelled to take it.

The gifted being did not talk much during dinner, but Pen remarked that she ate with a vast appetite, and never refused any of the supplies of wine which were offered to her by the butler. Indeed, Miss Bunion having considered Mr. Pendennis for a minute, who gave himself rather grand airs, and who was attired in an extremely fashionable style, with his very best chains, shirt studs, and cambric fronts, he was set down, and not without reason, as a prig by the poetess; who thought it was much better to attend to her dinner than to take any notice of him. She told him as much in after days with her usual candour. "I took you for one of the little Mayfair dandies," she said to Pen. "You looked as solemn as a little undertaker; and as I disliked, beyond measure, the odious creature who was on the other side of me, I thought it was best to eat my dinner and hold my tongue."

"And you did both very well, my dear Miss Bunion," Pen said with a laugh.

"Well, so I do, but I intend to talk to you the next time a great deal: for you are neither so solemn, nor so stupid, nor so pert, as you look."

"Ah, Miss Bunion, how I pine for that 'next time' to come," Pen, said, with an air of comical gallantry:—But we must return to the day and the dinner at Paternoster Row.

The repast was of the richest description—"What I call of the florid Gothic style," Wagg whispered to Pen, who sate beside the

humourist, in his side-wing voice. The men in creaking shoes and Berlin gloves were numerous and solemn, carrying on rapid conversations behind the guests, as they moved to and fro with the dishes. Doolan called out, "Waither," to one of them, and blushed when he thought of his blunder. Mrs. Bungay's own footboy was lost amidst those large and black-coated attendants.

"Look at that *very* bow-windowed man," Wagg said. "He's an undertaker in Amen Corner, and attends funerals and dinners. Cold meat and hot, don't you perceive? He's the sham butler here, and I observe, my dear Mr. Pendennis, as you will through life, that wherever there is a sham butler at a London dinner, there is sham wine—this sherry is filthy. Bungay, my boy, where did you get this delicious brown sherry?"

"I'm glad you like it, Mr. Wagg; glass with you," said the publisher. "It's some I got from Alderman Benning's store, and gave a good figure for it, I can tell you. Mr. Pendennis, will you join us? Your 'ealth, gentlemen."

"The old rogue, where does he expect to go to? It came from the public-house," Wagg said. "It requires two men to carry off that sherry, 'tis so uncommonly strong. I wish I had a bottle of old Steyne's wine here, Pendennis: your uncle and I have had many a one. He sends it about to people where he is in the habit of dining. I remember at poor Rawdon Crawley's, Sir Pitt Crawley's brother—he was Governor of Coventry Island—Steyne's chef always came in the morning, and the butler arrived with the champagne from Gaunt House, in the ice-pails ready."

"How good this is!" said Popjoy, good-naturedly. "You must have a *cordon bleu* in your kitchen."

"O yes," Mrs. Bungay said, thinking he spoke of a jack-chain very likely.

"I mean a French chef," said the polite guest.

"O yes, your lordship," again said the lady.

"Does your artist say he's a Frenchman, Mrs. B.?" called out Wagg.

"Well, I'm sure I don't know," answered the publisher's lady.

"Because, if he does, he's a *quizzin yer*," cried Mr. Wagg; but nobody saw the pun, which disconcerted somewhat the bashful punster. "The dinner is from Griggs' in St. Paul's Churchyard; so is Bacon's," he whispered Pen. "Bungay writes to give half-a-crown a head more than Bacon,—so does Bacon. They would poison each other's ices if they could get near them; and as for the made-dishes—

they are poison. This—hum—ha—this *Brimborion à la Sévigné* is delicious, Mrs. B.," he said, helping himself to a dish which the undertaker handed to him.

"Well, I'm glad you like it," Mrs. Bungay answered, blushing, and not knowing whether the name of the dish was actually that which Wagg gave to it, but dimly conscious that that individual was quizzing her. Accordingly she hated Mr. Wagg with female ardour; and would have deposed him from his command over Mr. Bungay's periodical, but that his name was great in the trade, and his reputation in the land considerable.

By the displacement of persons, Warrington had found himself on the right hand of Mrs. Shandon, who sate in plain black silk and faded ornaments by the side of the florid publisher. The sad smile of the lady moved his rough heart to pity. Nobody seemed to interest himself about her: she sate looking at her husband, who himself seemed rather abashed in the presence of some of the company. Wenham and Wagg both knew him and his circumstances. He had worked with the latter, and was immeasurably his superior in wit, genius, and acquirements; but Wagg's star was brilliant in the world, and poor Shandon was unknown there. He could not speak before the noisy talk of the coarser and more successful man; but drank his wine in silence, and as much of it as the people would give him. He was under *surveillance*. Bungay had warned the undertaker not to fill the Captain's glass too often or too full. It was a melancholy precaution that, and the more melancholy that it was necessary. Mrs. Shandon, too, cast alarmed glances across the table to see that her husband did not exceed.

Abashed by the failure of his first pun, for he was impudent and easily disconcerted, Wagg kept his conversation pretty much to Pen during the rest of dinner, and of course chiefly spoke about their neighbours. "This is one of Bungay's grand field-days," he said. "We are all Bungavians here.—Did you read Popjoy's novel? I was an old magazine story written by poor Buzzard years ago, and forgotten here until Mr. Trotter (that is Trotter with the large shirt collar) fished it out and bethought him that it was applicable to the late elopement; so Bob wrote a few chapters *àpropos*—Popjoy permitted the use of his name, and I dare say supplied a page here and there—and 'Desperation, or the Fugitive Duchess' made its appearance. The great fun is to examine Popjoy about his own work, of which he doesn't know a word.—I say, Popjoy, what a capital passage that is in Volume Three—where the Cardinal in disguise, after being

converted by the Bishop of London, proposes marriage to the Duchess's daughter."

"Glad you like it," Popjoy answered; "it's a favourite bit of my own."

"There's no such thing in the whole book," whispered Wagg to Pen. "Invented it myself. Gad! it wouldn't be a bad plot for a high-church novel."

"I remember poor Byron, Hobhouse, Trelawney, and myself, dining with Cardinal Mezzocaldo, at Rome," Captain Sumph began, "and we had some Orvieto wine for dinner, which Byron liked very much. And I remember how the Cardinal regretted that he was a single man. We went to Civita Vecchia two days afterwards, where Byron's yacht was—and, by Jove, the Cardinal died within three weeks; and Byron was very sorry, for he rather liked him."

"A devilish interesting story, Sumph, indeed," Wagg said.

"You should publish some of those stories, Captain Sumph, you really should. Such a volume would make our friend Bungay's fortune," Shandon said.

"Why don't you ask Sumph to publish 'em in your new paper—the what-d'ye-call'em—hay, Shandon?" bawled out Wagg.

"Why don't you ask him to publish 'em in your old magazine, the Thingumbob?" Shandon replied.

"Is there going to be a new paper?" asked Wenham, who knew perfectly well; but was ashamed of his connexion with the press.

"Bungay going to bring out a paper?" cried Popjoy, who, on the contrary, was proud of his literary reputation and acquaintances. "You must employ me. Mrs. Bungay, use your influence with him, and make him employ me. Prose or verse—what shall it be? Novels poems, travels, or leading articles, begad. Anything or everything—only let Bungay pay me, and I'm ready—I am now, my dear Mrs. Bungay, begad now."

"It's to be called the 'Small Beer Chronicle,'" growled Wagg, "and little Popjoy is to be engaged for the infantine department."

"It is to be called the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' sir, and we shall be very happy to have you with us," Shandon said.

"'Pall Mall Gazette'—why 'Pall Mall Gazette'?" asked Wagg.

"Because the editor was born at Dublin, the sub-editor at Cork, because the proprietor lives in Paternoster Row, and the paper is published in Catherine Street, Strand. Won't that reason suffice you, Wagg?" Shandon said; he was getting rather angry. "Everything

must have a name. My dog Ponto has got a name. You've got a name, and a name which you deserve, more or less, bedad. Why d'ye grudge the name to our paper?"

"By any other name it would smell as sweet," said Wagg.

"I'll have ye remember it's name's not whatdyecallem, Mr. Wagg," said Shandon. "You know its name well enough, and—and you know mine."

"And I know your address, too," said Wagg, but this was spoken in an undertone, and the good-natured Irishman was appeased almost in an instant after his ebullition of spleen, and asked Wagg to drink wine with him in a friendly voice.

When the ladies retired from the table, the talk grew louder still; and presently Wenham, in a courtly speech, proposed that everybody should drink to the health of the new Journal, eulogising highly the talents, wit, and learning of its editor, Captain Shandon. It was his maxim never to lose the support of a newspaper man, and in the course of that evening, he went round and saluted every literary gentleman present with a privy compliment specially addressed to him; informing this one how great an impression had been made in Downing Street by his last article, and telling that one how profoundly his good friend, the Duke of So and So, had been struck by the ability of the late numbers.

The evening came to a close, and in spite of all the precautions to the contrary, poor Shandon reeled in his walk, and went home to his new lodgings, with his faithful wife by his side, and the cabman on his box jeering at him. Wenham had a chariot of his own, which he put at Popjoy's service; and the timid Miss Bunion seeing Mr. Wagg, who was her neighbour, about to depart, insisted upon a seat in his carriage, much to that gentleman's discomfiture.

Pen and Warrington walked home together in the moonlight. "And now," Warrington said, "that you have seen the men of letters, tell me, was I far wrong in saying that there are thousands of people in this town, who don't write books, who are, to the full, as clever and intellectual as people who do?"

Pen was forced to confess that the literary personages with whom he had become acquainted had not said much, in the course of the night's conversation, that was worthy to be remembered or quoted. In fact, not one word about literature had been said during the whole course of the night:—and it may be whispered to those uninitiated people who are anxious to know the habits and make the acquaintance of men of letters, that there are no race of people who talk about *books, or perhaps,* who read books, so little as literary men.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

CONSIDERABLE success at first attended the new journal. It was generally stated, that an influential political party supported the paper; and great names were cited amongst the contributors to its columns. Was there any foundation for these rumours? We are not at liberty to say whether they were well or ill founded; but this much we may divulge, that an article upon foreign policy, which was generally attributed to a noble Lord, whose connexion with the Foreign Office is very well known, was in reality composed by Captain Shandon, in the parlour of the Bear and Staff public-house near Whitehall Stairs, whither the printer's boy had tracked him, and where a literary ally of his, Mr. Bludyer, had a temporary residence; and that a series of papers on finance questions, which were universally supposed to be written by a great Statesman of the House of Commons, were in reality composed by Mr. George Warrington of the Upper Temple.

That there may have been some dealings between the "Pall Mall Gazette" and this influential party, is very possible. Percy Popjoy (whose father, Lord Falconet, was a member of the party) might be seen not unfrequently ascending the stairs to Warrington's chambers; and some information appeared in the paper which gave it a character, and could only be got from very peculiar sources. Several poems, feeble in thought, but loud and vigorous in expression, appeared in

the "Pall Mall Gazette," with the signature of "P.P."; and it must be owned that his novel was praised in the new journal in a very outrageous manner.

In the political department of the paper Mr. Pen did not take any share; but he was a most active literary contributor. The "Pall

Mall Gazette" had its offices, as we have heard, in Catherine Street in the Strand, and hither Pen often came with his manuscripts in his pocket, and with a great deal of bustle and pleasure; such as a man feels at the outset of his literary career, when to see himself in print is still a novel sensation, and he yet pleases himself to think that his writings are creating some noise in the world.

Here it was that Mr. Jack Finucane, the sub-editor, compiled with paste and scissors the journal of which he was supervisor. With an eagle eye he scanned all the paragraphs of all the newspapers which had anything to do with the world of fashion over which he presided. He didn't let a death or a dinner-party of the aristocracy pass without having the event recorded in the columns of his journal; and from the most recondite provincial prints, and distant Scotch and Irish newspapers, he fished out astonishing paragraphs and intelligence regarding the upper classes of society. It was a grand, nay, a touching sight, for a philosopher to see Jack Finucane, Esquire, with a plate of meat from the cookshop, and a glass of porter from the public-house, for his meal, recounting the feasts of the great, as if he had been present at them; and in tattered trousers and dingy shirt-sleeves, cheerfully describing and arranging the most brilliant *fêtes* of the world of fashion. The incongruity of Finucane's avocation, and his manners and appearance, amused his new friend Pen. Since he left his own native village, where his rank probably was not very lofty, Jack had seldom seen any society but such as used the parlour of the taverns which he frequented, whereas from his writing you would have supposed that he dined with ambassadors, and that his common lounge was the bow-window of White's. Errors of description, it is true, occasionally slipped from his pen; but the "Ballinafad Sentinel," of which he was own correspondent, suffered by these, not the "Pall Mall Gazette," in which Jack was not permitted to write much, his London chiefs thinking that the scissors and the paste were better wielded by him than the pen.

Pen took a great deal of pains with the writing of his reviews, and having a pretty fair share of desultory reading, acquired in the early years of his life, an eager fancy and a keen sense of fun, his articles pleased his chief and the public, and he was proud to think that he deserved the money which he earned. We may be sure that the "Pall Mall Gazette" was taken in regularly at Fairoaks, and read with delight by the two ladies there. It was received at Clavering Park, too, where we know there was a young lady of great literary tastes; and old Doctor Portman himself, to whom the widow sent her paper

after she had got her son's articles by heart, signified his approval of Pen's productions, saying that the lad had spirit, taste, and fancy, and wrote, if not like a scholar, at any rate like a gentleman.

And what was the astonishment and delight of our friend Major Pendennis, on walking into one of his clubs, the Regent, where Wenham, Lord Falconet, and some other gentlemen of good reputation and fashion were assembled, to hear them one day talking over a number of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and of an article which appeared in its columns, making some bitter fun of a book recently published by the wife of a celebrated member of the opposition party. The book in question was a Book of Travels in Spain and Italy, by the Countess of Muffborough, in which it was difficult to say which was the most wonderful, the French or the English, in which languages her ladyship wrote indifferently, and upon the blunders of which the critic pounced with delighted mischief. The critic was no other than Pen: he jumped and danced round about his subject with the greatest jocularity and high spirits: he showed up the noble lady's faults with admirable mock gravity and decorum. There was not a word in the article which was not polite and gentleman-like; and the unfortunate subject of the criticism was scarified and laughed at during the operation. Wenham's bilious countenance was puckered up with malign pleasure as he read the critique. Lady Muffborough had not asked him to her parties during the last year. Lord Falconet giggled and laughed with all his heart; Lord Muffborough and he had been rivals ever since they began life; and these complimented Major Pendennis, who until now had scarcely paid any attention to some hints which his Fairoaks correspondence threw out of "dear Arthur's constant and severe literary occupations, which I fear may undermine the poor boy's health," and had thought any notice of Mr. Pen and his newspaper connexions quite below his dignity as a Major and a gentleman.

But when the oracular Wenham praised the boy's production; when Lord Falconet, who had had the news from Percy Popjoy, approved of the genius of young Pen; when the great Lord Steyne himself, to whom the Major referred the article, laughed and sniggered over it, swore it was capital, and that the Muffborough would writhe under it, like a whale under a harpoon, the Major, as in duty bound, began to admire his nephew very much, said, "By gad, the young rascal had some stuff in him, and would do something; he had always said he would do something;" and with a hand quite tremulous with pleasure, the old gentleman sate down to write to the widow at Fairoaks all that

the great folks had said in praise of Pen; and he wrote to the young rascal, too, asking when he would come and eat a chop with his old uncle, and saying that he was commissioned to take him to dinner at Gaunt House, for Lord Steyne liked anybody who could entertain him, whether by his folly, wit, or by his dulness, by his oddity, affectation, good spirits, or any other quality. Pen flung his letter across the table to Warrington; perhaps he was disappointed that the other did not seem to be much affected by it.

The courage of young critics is prodigious: they clamber up to the judgment seat, and, with scarce a hesitation, give their opinion upon works the most intricate or profound. Had Macaulay's History or Herschel's Astronomy been put before Pen at this period, he would have looked through the volumes, meditated his opinion over a cigar, and signified his august approval of either author, as if the critic had been their born superior and indulgent master and patron. By the help of the Biographie Universelle or the British Museum, he would be able to take a rapid *résumé* of a historical period, and allude to names, dates, and facts, in such a masterly, easy way, as to astonish his mamma at home, who wondered where her boy could have acquired such a prodigious store of reading, and himself, too, when he came to read over his articles two or three months after they had been composed, and when he had forgotten the subject and the books which he had consulted. At that period of his life Mr. Pen owns, that he would not have hesitated, at twenty-four hours' notice, to pass an opinion upon the greatest scholars, or to give a judgment upon the Encyclopædia. Luckily he had Warrington to laugh at him and to keep down his impertinence by a constant and wholesome ridicule, or he might have become conceited beyond all sufferance; for Shandon liked the dash and flippancy of his young *aide-de-camp*, and was, indeed, better pleased with Pen's light and brilliant flashes, than with the heavier metal which his elder coadjutor brought to bear.

But though he might justly be blamed on the score of impertinence and a certain prematurity of judgment, Mr. Pen was a perfectly honest critic; a great deal too candid for Mr. Bungay's purposes, indeed, who grumbled sadly at his impartiality. Pen and his chief, the Captain had a dispute upon this subject one day. "In the name of common sense, Mr. Pendennis," Shandon asked, "what have you been doing—praising one of Mr. Bacon's books? Bungay has been with me in a fury this morning, at seeing a laudatory article upon one of the works of the odious firm over the way."

Pen's eyes opened with wide astonishment. "Do you mean to say,"

he asked, "that we are to praise no books that Bacon publishes: or that, if the books are good, we are to say they are bad?"

"My good young friend—for what do you suppose a benevolent publisher undertakes a critical journal, to benefit his rival?" Shandon inquired.

"To benefit himself certainly, but to tell the truth too," Pen said—"*ruat cœlum*, to tell the truth."

"And my prospectus," said Shandon, with a laugh and a sneer; "do you consider that was a work of mathematical accuracy of statement?"

"Pardon me, that is not the question," Pen said; "and I don't think you very much care to argue it. I had some qualms of conscience about that same prospectus, and debated the matter with my friend Warrington. We agreed, however," Pen said, laughing, "that because the prospectus was rather declamatory and poetical, and the giant was painted upon the show-board rather larger than the original, who was inside the caravan, we need not be too scrupulous about this trifling inaccuracy, but might do our part of the show, without loss of character or remorse of conscience. We are the fiddlers, and play our tunes only; you are the showman."

"And leader of the van," said Shandon. "Well, I am glad that your conscience gave you leave to play for us."

"Yes, but," said Pen, with a fine sense of the dignity of his position, "we are all party men in England, and I will stick to my party like a Briton. I will be as good-natured as you like to our own side, he is a fool who quarrels with his own nest; and I will hit the enemy as hard as you like—but with fair play, Captain, if you please. One can't tell all the truth, I suppose; but one can tell nothing but the truth: and I would rather starve, by Jove, and never earn another penny by my pen" (this redoubted instrument had now been in use for some six weeks, and Pen spoke of it with vast enthusiasm and respect) "than strike an opponent an unfair blow, or, if called upon to place him, rank him below his honest desert."

"Well, Mr. Pendennis, when we want Bacon smashed, we must get some other hammer to do it," Shandon said, with fatal good-nature; and very likely thought within himself, "A few years hence perhaps the young gentleman won't be so squeamish." The veteran Condottiere himself was no longer so scrupulous. He had fought and killed on so many a side for many a year past, that remorse had long left him. "Gad," said he, "you've a tender conscience, Mr. Pendennis. It's the *luxury of all* novices, and I may have had one once myself; but that

sort of bloom wears off with the rubbing of the world, and I'm not going to the trouble myself of putting on an artificial complexion, like our pious friend Wenham, or our model of virtue, Wagg."

"I don't know whether some people's hypocrisy is not better, Captain, than others' cynicism."

"It's more profitable, at any rate," said the Captain, biting his nails. "That Wenham is as dull a quack as ever quacked: and you see the carriage in which he drove to dinner. 'Faith, it'll be a long time before Mrs. Shandon will take a drive in her own chariot. God help her, poor thing!" And Pen went away from his chief, after their little dispute and colloquy, pointing his own moral to the Captain's tale, and thinking to himself, "Behold this man, stored with genius, wit, learning, and a hundred good natural gifts: see how he has wrecked them, by paltering with his honesty, and forgetting to respect himself. Wilt thou remember thyself, O Pen? thou art conceited enough! Wilt thou sell thy honour for a bottle? No, by heaven's grace, we will be honest whatever befalls, and our mouths shall only speak the truth when they open."

A punishment, or, at least, a trial, was in store for Mr. Pen. In the very next Number of the "Pall Mall Gazette," Warrington read out, with roars of laughter, an article which by no means amused Arthur Pendennis, who was himself at work with a criticism for the next week's Number of the same journal; and in which the "Spring Annual" was ferociously maltreated by some unknown writer. The person of all most cruelly mauled was Pen himself. His verses had not appeared with his own name in the "Spring Annual," but under an assumed signature. As he had refused to review the book, Shandon had handed it over to Mr. Bludyer, with directions to that author to dispose of it. And he had done so effectually. Mr. Bludyer, who was a man of very considerable talent, and of a race which, I believe, is quite extinct in the press of our time, had a certain notoriety in his profession, and reputation for savage humour. He smashed and trampled down the poor spring flowers with no more mercy than a bull would have on a parterre; and having cut up the volume to his heart's content, went and sold it at a bookstall, and purchased a pint of brandy with the proceeds of the volume.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WHERE PEN APPEARS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

LET us be allowed to pass over a few months of the history of Mr. Arthur Pendennis's lifetime, during the which, many events may have occurred which were more interesting and exciting to himself, than they would be likely to prove to the reader of his present memoirs. We left him, in the last chapter, regularly entered upon his business as a professional writer, or literary hack, as Mr. Warrington chooses to style himself and his friend; and we know how the life of any hack, legal or literary, in a curacy, or in a marching regiment, or at a merchant's desk, is full of routine, and tedious of description. One day's labour resembles another much too closely. A literary man has often to work for his bread against time, or against his will, or in spite of his health, or of his indolence, or of his repugnance to the subject on which he is called to exert himself, just like any other daily toiler. When you want to make money by Pegasus (as he must, perhaps, who has no other saleable property), farewell poetry

and aerial flights: Pegasus only rises now like Mr. Green's balloon, at periods advertised beforehand, and when the spectators' money has been paid. Pegasus trots in harness, over the stony pavement, and pulls a cart or a cab behind him. Often Pegasus does his work with panting sides and trembling knees, and not seldom gets a cut of the whip from his driver.

Do not let us, however, be too prodigal of our pity upon Pegasus. There is no reason why this animal should be exempt from labour, or illness, or decay, any more than any of the other creatures of God's world. If he gets the whip, Pegasus very often deserves it, and I for one am quite ready to protest with my friend, George Warrington, against the doctrine which some poetical sympathisers are inclined to put forward, viz., that men of letters, and what is called genius, are to be exempt from the prose duties of this daily, bread-wanting, tax-paying life, and are not to be made to work and pay like their neighbours.

Well then, the "Pall Mall Gazette" being duly established, and Arthur Pendennis's merits recognized as a flippant, witty, and amusing critic, he worked away hard every week, preparing reviews of such works as came into his department, and writing his reviews with flippancy certainly, but with honesty, and to the best of his power. It might be that a historian of threescore, who had spent a quarter of a century in composing a work of which our young gentleman disposed in the course of a couple of days' reading at the British Museum, was not altogether fairly treated by such a facile critic; or that a poet, who had been elaborating sublime sonnets and odes until he thought them fit for the public and for fame, was annoyed by two or three dozen pert lines in Mr. Pen's review, in which the poet's claims were settled by the critic, as if the latter were my lord on the bench, and the author a miserable little suitor trembling before him. The actors at the theatres complained of him wofully, too, and very likely he was too hard upon them. But there was not much harm done after all. It is different now, as we know; but there were so few great historians, or great poets, or great actors, in Pen's time, that scarce any at all came up for judgment before his critical desk. Those who got a little whipping, got what in the main was good for them; not that the judge was any better or wiser than the persons whom he sentenced, or indeed ever fancied himself so. Pen had a strong sense of humour and justice, and had not therefore an overweening respect for his own works; besides, he had his friend Warrington at his elbow—a terrible critic if the young man was disposed to be conceited, and more savage

over Pen than ever he was to those whom he tried at his literary assize.

By these critical labours, and by occasional contributions to leading articles of the journal, when, without wounding his paper, this eminent publicist could conscientiously speak his mind, Mr. Arthur Pendennis gained the sum of four pounds four shillings weekly, and with no small pains and labour. Likewise he furnished Magazines and Reviews with articles of his composition, and is believed to have been (though on this score he never chooses to speak) London correspondent of the "Chatteris Champion," which at that time contained some very brilliant and eloquent letters from the metropolis. By these labours the fortunate youth was enabled to earn a sum very nearly equal to four hundred pounds a-year; and on the second Christmas after his arrival in London, he actually brought a hundred pounds to his mother, as a dividend upon the debt which he owed to Laura. That Mrs. Pendennis read every word of her son's works, and considered him to be the profoundest thinker and most elegant writer of the day; that she thought his retribution of the hundred pounds an act of angelic virtue; that she feared he was ruining his health by his labours, and was delighted when he told her of the society which he met, and of the great men of letters and fashion whom he saw, will be imagined by all readers who have seen son-worship amongst mothers, and that charming simplicity of love with which women in the country watch the career of their darlings in London. If John has held such and such a brief; if Tom has been invited to such and such a ball; or George has met this or that great and famous man at dinner; what a delight there is in the hearts of mothers and sisters at home in Somersetshire! How young Hopeful's letters are read and remembered! What a theme for village talk they give, and friendly congratulation! In the second winter, Pen came for a very brief space, and cheered the widow's heart, and lightened up the lonely house at Fairoaks. Helen had her son all to herself; Laura was away on a visit to old Lady Rockminster; the folks of Clavering Park were absent; the very few old friends of the house, Doctor Portman at their head, called upon Mr. Pen, and treated him with marked respect; between mother and son, it was all fondness, confidence, and affection. It was the happiest fortnight of the widow's whole life; perhaps in the lives of both of them. The holiday was gone only too quickly; and Pen was back in the busy world, and the gentle widow alone again. She sent Arthur's money to Laura: I don't know why this young lady took

the opportunity of leaving home when Pen was coming thither, or whether he was the more piqued or relieved by her absence.

He was by this time, by his own merits and his uncle's introductions, pretty well introduced into London, and known both in literary and polite circles. Amongst the former his fashionable reputation stood him in no little stead; he was considered to be a gentleman of good present means and better expectations, who wrote for his pleasure, than which there cannot be a greater recommendation to a young literary aspirant. Bacon, Bungay, and Co., were proud to accept his articles; Mr. Wenham asked him to dinner; Mr. Wagg looked upon him with a favourable eye; and they reported how they met him at the houses of persons of fashion, amongst whom he was pretty welcome, as they did not trouble themselves about his means, present or future; as his appearance and address were good; and as he had got a character for being a clever fellow. Finally, he was asked to one house, because he was seen at another house: and thus no small varieties of London life were presented to the young man: he was made familiar with all sorts of people from Paternoster Row to Pimlico, and was as much at home at Mayfair dining-tables as at those tavern boards where some of his companions of the pen were accustomed to assemble.

Full of high spirits and curiosity, easily adapting himself to all whom he met, the young fellow pleased himself in this strange variety and jumble of men, and made himself welcome, or at ease at least, wherever he went. He would breakfast, for instance, at Mr. Plover's of a morning, in company with a Peer, a Bishop, a parliamentary orator, two blue ladies of fashion, a popular preacher, the author of the last new novel, and the very latest lion imported from Egypt or from America; and would quit this distinguished society for the back room at the newspaper office, where pens and ink and the wet proof sheets were awaiting him. Here would be Finucane, the sub-editor, with the last news from the Row: and Shandon would come in presently, and giving a nod to Pen, would begin scribbling his leading article at the other end of the table, flanked by the pint of sherry, which, when the attendant boy beheld him, was always silently brought for the Captain: or Mr. Bludyer's roaring voice would be heard in the front room, where that truculent critic would impound the books on the counter in spite of the timid remonstrances of Mr. Midge, the publisher, and after looking through the volumes would sell them at his accustomed bookstall, and having drunken and dined upon the produce of the sale in a tavern box, would call for ink and paper, and proceed to "smash" the author of his dinner and the novel. Towards

evening Mr. Pen would stroll in the direction of his club, and take up Warrington there for a constitutional walk. This exercise freed the lungs, and gave an appetite for dinner, after which Pen had the privilege to make his bow at some very pleasant houses which were opened

to him; or the town before him for amusement. There was the Opera; or the Eagle Tavern; or a ball to go to in May Fair; or a quiet night with a cigar and a book and a long talk with Warrington; or a wonderful new song at the Back Kitchen;—at this time of his life Mr. Pen beheld all sorts of places and men; and very likely did not know how much he enjoyed himself until long after, when balls *gave him no* pleasure, neither did farces make him laugh; nor did the

tavern joke produce the least excitement in him; nor did the loveliest dancer that ever showed her ancles cause him to stir from his chair after dinner. At his present mature age all these pleasures are over: and the times have passed away too. It is but a very very few years since—but the time is gone, and most of the men. Bludyer will no more bully authors or cheat landlords of their score. Shandon, the learned and thriftless, the witty and unwise, sleeps his last sleep. They buried honest Doolan the other day: never will he cringe or flatter, never pull long-bow or empty whiskey-noggin any more.

The London season was now blooming in its full vigour, and the fashionable newspapers abounded with information regarding the grand banquets, routs, and balls which were enlivening the polite world. Our gracious Sovereign was holding levees and drawing-rooms at St. James's: the bow-windows of the clubs were crowded with the heads of respectable red-faced newspaper-reading gentlemen: along the Serpentine trailed thousands of carriages: squadrons of dandy horsemen trampled over Rotten Row: everybody was in town in a word; and of course Major Arthur Pendennis, who was somebody, was not absent.

With his head tied up in a smart bandana handkerchief, and his meagre carcass enveloped in a brilliant Turkish dressing-gown, the worthy gentleman sate on a certain morning by his fireside, letting his feet gently simmer in a bath, whilst he took his early cup of tea, and perused his "Morning Post." He could not have faced the day without his two hours' toilet, without his early cup of tea, without his "Morning Post." I suppose nobody in the world except Morgan, not even Morgan's master himself, knew how feeble and ancient the Major was growing, and what numberless little comforts he required.

If men sneer, as our habit is, at the artifices of an old beauty, at her paint, perfumes, ringlets; at those innumerable, and to us unknown, stratagems with which she is said to remedy the ravages of time and reconstruct the charms whereof years have bereft her; the ladies, it is to be presumed, are not on their side altogether ignorant that men are vain as well as they, and that the toilets of old bucks are to the full as elaborate as their own. How is it that old Blushington keeps that constant little rose-tint on his cheeks; and where does old Blondel get the preparation which makes his silver hair pass for golden? Have you ever seen Lord Hotspur get off his horse when he thinks nobody is looking? Taken out of his stirrups, his shiny boots can hardly totter up the steps of Hotspur House. He is a dashing

young nobleman still as you see the back of him in Rotten Row : when you behold him on foot, what an old, old fellow ! Did you ever form to yourself any idea of Dick Lacy (Dick has been Dick these sixty years) in a natural state, and without his stays ? All these men are objects whom the observer of human life and manners may contemplate with as much profit as the most elderly Belgravian Venus, or inveterate Mayfair Jezebel. An old reprobate daddy long-legs, who has never said his prayers (except perhaps in public) these fifty years : an old buck who still clings to as many of the habits of youth as his feeble grasp of health can hold by : who has given up the bottle, but sits with young fellows over it, and tells naughty stories upon toast and water—who has given up beauty, but still talks about it as wickedly as the youngest roué in company—such an old fellow, I say, if any parson in Pimlico or St. James's were to order the beadles to bring him into the middle aisle, and there set him in an armchair, and make a text of him, and preach about him to the congregation, could be turned to a wholesome use for once in his life, and might be surprised to find that some good thoughts came out of him. But, we are wandering from our text, the honest Major, who sits all this while with his feet cooling in the bath : Morgan takes them out of that place of purification, and dries them daintily, and proceeds to set the old gentleman on his legs, with waistband and wig, starched cravat, and spotless boots and gloves.

It was during these hours of the toilet that Morgan and his employer had their confidential conversations, for they did not meet much at other times of the day—the Major abhorring the society of his own chairs and tables in his lodgings ; and Morgan, his master's toilet over and letters delivered, had his time very much on his own hands.

This spare time the active and well-mannered gentleman bestowed among the valets and butlers of the nobility, his acquaintance : and Morgan Pendennis, as he was styled, for, by such compound names, gentlemen's gentlemen are called in their private circles, was a frequent and welcome guest at some of the very highest tables in this town. He was a member of two influential clubs in Mayfair and Pimlico ; and he was thus enabled to know the whole gossip of the town, and entertain his master very agreeably during the two hours' toilet conversation. He knew a hundred tales and legends regarding persons of the very highest *ton*, whose valets canvass their august secrets, just, my dear madam, as our own parlour-maids and dependents in the kitchen discuss our characters, our stinginess and generosity, our

pecuniary means or embarrassments, and our little domestic or connubial tiffs and quarrels. If I leave this manuscript open on my table, I have not the slightest doubt Betty will read it, and they will talk it over in the lower regions to-night; and to-morrow she will bring in my breakfast with a face of such entire imperturbable innocence, that no mortal could suppose her guilty of playing the spy. If you and the Captain have high words upon any subject, which is just possible, the circumstances of the quarrel, and the characters of both of you, will be discussed with impartial eloquence over the kitchen tea-table; and if Mrs. Smith's maid should by chance be taking a dish of tea with yours, her presence will not undoubtedly act as a restraint upon the discussion in question; her opinion will be given with candour; and the next day her mistress will probably know that Captain and Mrs. Jones have been a quarrelling as usual. Nothing is secret. Take it as a rule that John knows everything: and as in our humble world so in the greatest: a duke is no more a hero to his *valet-de-chambre* than you or I; and his Grace's Man at his club, in company doubtless with other Men of equal social rank, talks over his master's character and affairs with the ingenuous truthfulness which befits gentlemen who are met together in confidence. Who is a niggard and screws up his money-boxes: who is in the hands of the money-lenders, and is putting his noble name on the back of bills of exchange: who is intimate with whose wife: who wants whom to marry her daughter, and which he won't, no not at any price:—all these facts gentlemen's confidential gentlemen discuss confidentially, and are known and examined by every person who has any claim to rank in genteel society. In a word, if old Pendennis himself was said to know everything, and was at once admirably scandalous and delightfully discreet; it is but justice to Morgan to say, that a great deal of his master's information was supplied to that worthy man by his valet, who went out and foraged knowledge for him. Indeed, what more effectual plan is there to get a knowledge of London society, than to begin at the foundation—that is, at the kitchen-floor?

So Mr. Morgan and his employer conversed as the latter's toilet proceeded. There had been a Drawing-room on the day previous, and the Major read among the presentations that of Lady Clavering by Lady Rockminster, and of Miss Amory by her mother, Lady Clavering,—and in a further part of the paper their dresses were described, with a precision and in a jargon which will puzzle and amuse the antiquary of future generations. The sight of these names carried Pendennis back to the country. "How long have the

Claverings been in London?" he asked; "pray, Morgan, have you seen any of their people?"

"Sir Francis have sent away his foring man, sir," Mr. Morgan replied; "and have took a friend of mine as own man, sir. Indeed he applied on my reckmendation. You may recklect Towler, sir,—tall red-aired man—but dyes his air. Was groom of the chambers in Lord Levant's famly till his Lordship broke hup. It's a fall for Towler, sir; but pore men can't be particklar," said the valet with a pathetic voice.

"Devilish hard on Towler, by gad!" said the Major, amused, "and not pleasant for Lord Levant—he, he!"

"Always knew it was coming, sir. I spoke to you of it Michaelmas was four years: when her Ladyship put the diamonds in pawn. It was Towler, sir, took 'em in two cabs to Dobree's—and a good deal of the plate went the same way. Don't you remember seeing of it at Blackwall, with the Levant arms and coronick, and Lord Levant settn oppsit to it at the Marquis of Steyne's dinner? Beg your pardon; did I cut you, sir?"

Morgan was now operating upon the Major's chin—he continued the theme while strapping the skilful razor. "They've took a house in Grosvenor Place, and are coming out strong, sir. Her ladyship's going to give three parties, besides a dinner a-week, sir. Her fortune won't stand it—can't stand it."

"Gad, she had a devilish good cook when I was at Fairoaks," the Major said, with very little compassion for the widow Amory's fortune.

"Marobblan was his name, sir;—Marobblan's gone away, sir;" Morgan said,—and the Major, this time, with hearty sympathy, said, "he was devilish sorry to lose him."

"There's been a tremenjuous row about that Mosseer Marobblan," Morgan continued. "At a ball at Baymouth, sir, bless his impadence, he challenged Mr. Harthur to fight a jewel, sir, which Mr. Harthur was very near knocking him down, and pitchin' him outawinder, and serve him right; but Chevalier Strong, sir, came up and stopped the shindy—I beg pardon, the holtercation, sir—them French cooks has as much pride and hinsolence as if they was real gentlemen."

"I heard something of that quarrel," said the Major; "but Mirobolant was not turned off for that?"

"No, sir—that affair, sir, which Mr. Harthur forgave it him and beaved most handsome, was hushed hup: it was about Miss Hamory, *sir, that he* ad his dismissial. Those French fellers, they fancy every

body is in love with 'em; and he climbed up the large grape vine to her winder, sir, and was a trying to get in, when he was caught, sir; and Mr. Strong came out, and they got the garden-engine and played on him, and there was no end of a row, sir."

"Confound his impudence! You don't mean to say Miss Amory encouraged him?" cried the Major, amazed at a peculiar expression in Mr. Morgan's countenance.

Morgan resumed his imperturbable demeanour. "Know nothing about it, sir. Servants don't know them kind of things the least. Most probbly there was nothing in it—so many lies is told about families—Marobblan went away, bag and baggage, saucepans, and pianna, and all—the feller ad a pianna, and wrote potry in French, and he took a lodging at Clavering, and he hankered about the primises, and it was said that Madame Fribsby, the milliner, brought letters to Miss Hamory, though I don't believe a word about it; nor that he tried to pison hisself with charcoal, which it was all a humbug betwigst him and Madame Fribsby; and he was nearly shot by the keeper in the park."

In the course of that very day, it chanced that the Major had stationed himself in the great window of Bays's Club in St. James's Street, at the hour in the afternoon when you see a half-score of respectable old bucks similarly recreating themselves (Bays's is rather an old-fashioned place of resort now, and many of its members more than middle-aged; but in the time of the Prince Regent, these old fellows occupied the same window, and were some of the very greatest dandies in this empire)—Major Pendennis was looking from the great window, and spied his nephew Arthur walking down the street in company with his friend Mr. Popjoy.

"Look!" said Popjoy to Pen, as they passed, "did you ever pass Bays's at four o'clock, without seeing that collection of old fogies? It's a regular museum. They ought to be cast in wax, and set up at Madame Tussaud's—"

"—In a chamber of old horrors by themselves," Pen said, laughing.

"—In the chamber of horrors! Gad, dooced good!" Pop cried. "They *are* old rogues, most of 'em, and no mistake. There's old Blondel; there's my uncle Colchicum, the most confounded old sinner in Europe; there's—hullo! there's somebody rapping the window and nodding at us."

"It's my uncle, the Major," said Pen. "Is he an old sinner too?"

"Notorious old rogue," Pop said, wagging his head. ("Notorious

old wogue," he pronounced the words, thereby rendering them much more emphatic.) "He's beckoning you in; he wants to speak to you."

"Come in too," Pen said.

"—Can't," replied the other. "Cut uncle Col. two years ago, *about* Mademoiselle Frangipane—Ta, ta," and the young sinner took

leave of Pen, and the club of the elder criminals, and sauntered into Blacquière's, an adjacent establishment, frequented by reprobates of his own age.

Colchicum, Blondel, and the senior bucks had just been conversing about the Clavering family, whose appearance in London had formed the subject of Major Pendennis's morning conversation with his valet. Mr. Blondel's house was next to that of Sir Francis Clavering, in Grosvenor Place : giving very good dinners himself, he had remarked some activity in his neighbour's kitchen. Sir Francis, indeed, had a new chef, who had come in more than once and dressed Mr. Blondel's dinner for him ; that gentleman having only a remarkably expert female artist permanently engaged in his establishment, and employing such chefs of note as happened to be free on the occasion of his grand banquets. "They go to a devilish expense and see devilish bad company as yet, I hear," Mr. Blondel said,—"they scour the streets, by gad, to get people to dine with 'em. Champignon says it breaks his heart to serve up a dinner to their society. What a shame it is that those low people should have money at all !" cried Mr. Blondel, whose grandfather had been a reputable leather-breeches maker, and whose father had lent money to the Princes.

"I wish I had fallen in with the widow myself," sighed Lord Colchicum, "and not been laid up with that confounded gout at Leghorn.—I would have married the woman myself.—I'm told she has six hundred thousand pounds in the Threes."

"Not *quite* so much as that,—I knew her family in India," Major Pendennis said.—"I knew her family in India ; her father was an enormously rich old indigo-planter,—know all about her,—Clavering has the next estate to ours in the country.—Ha ! there's my nephew walking with "—"With mine,—the infernal young scamp," said Lord Colchicum, glowering at Popjoy out of his heavy eyebrows ; and he turned away from the window as Major Pendennis tapped upon it.

The Major was in high good-humour. The sun was bright, the air brisk and invigorating. He had determined upon a visit to Lady Clavering on that day, and bethought him that Arthur would be a good companion for the walk across the Green Park to her ladyship's door. Master Pen was not displeased to accompany his illustrious relative, who pointed out a dozen great men in their brief transit through St. James's Street, and got bows from a Duke, at a crossing, a Bishop (on a cob), and a Cabinet Minister with an umbrella. The Duke gave the elder Pendennis a finger of a pipe-clayed glove to shake, which the Major embraced with great veneration ; and all Pen's blood

tingled, as he found himself in actual communication, as it were, with this famous man (for Pen had possession of the Major's left arm, whilst that gentleman's other wing was engaged with his Grace's right), and he wished all Grey Friars' School, all Oxbridge University, all Paternoster Row and the Temple, and Laura and his mother at Fairoaks, could be standing on each side of the street, to see the meeting between him and his uncle, and the most famous duke in Christendom.

"How do, Pendennis?—fine day," were his Grace's remarkable words, and with a nod of his august head he passed on—in a blue frock-coat and spotless white duck trousers, in a white stock, with a shining buckle behind.

Old Pendennis, whose likeness to his grace has been remarked, began to imitate him unconsciously, after they had parted, speaking with curt sentences, after the manner of the great man. We have all of us, no doubt, met with more than one military officer who has so imitated the manner of a certain Great Captain of the Age; and has, perhaps, changed his own natural character and disposition, because Fate had endowed him with an aquiline nose. In like manner have we not seen many another man pride himself on having a tall forehead and a supposed likeness to Mr. Canning? many another go through life swelling with self-gratification on account of an imagined resemblance (we say "imagined," because that anybody should be *really* like that most beautiful and perfect of men is impossible) to the great and revered George IV.: many third parties, who wore low necks to their dresses because they fancied that Lord Byron and themselves were similar in appearance: and has not the grave closed but lately upon poor Tom Bickerstaff, who having no more imagination than Mr. Joseph Hume, looked in the glass and fancied himself like Shakspeare? shaved his forehead so as further to resemble the immortal bard, wrote tragedies incessantly, and died perfectly crazy—actually perished of his forehead? These or similar freaks of vanity most people who have frequented the world must have seen in their experience. Pen laughed in his roguish sleeve at the manner in which his uncle began to imitate the great man from whom they had just parted: but Mr. Pen was as vain in his own way, perhaps, as the elder gentleman, and strutted, with a very consequential air of his own, by the Major's side.

"Yes, my dear boy," said the old bachelor, as they sauntered through the Green Park, where many poor children were disporting *happily, and* errand boys were playing at toss halfpenny, and black

sheep were grazing in the sunshine, and an actor was learning his part on a bench, and nursery-maids and their charges sauntered here and there, and several couples were walking in a leisurely manner; "yes, depend on it, my boy; for a poor man, there is nothing like having good acquaintances. Who were those men, with whom you saw me in the bow window at Bays's? Two were Peers of the realm. Hobananob *will* be a Peer, as soon as his grand-uncle dies, and he has had his third seizure; and of the other four, not one has less than his seven thousand a-year. Did you see that dark blue brougham, with that tremendous stepping horse, waiting at the door of the club? You'll know it again. It is Sir Hugh Trumpington's; he was never known to walk in his life; never appears in the streets on foot—never: and if he is going two doors off, to see his mother, the old dowager (to whom I shall certainly introduce you, for she receives some of the best company in London), gad, sir, he mounts his horse at No. 23, and dismounts again at No. 25A. He is now upstairs, at Bays's, playing picquet with Count Punter: he is the second-best player in England—as well he may be; for he plays every day of his life, except Sundays (for Sir Hugh is an uncommonly religious man), from half-past three till half-past seven, when he dresses for dinner."

"A very pious manner of spending his time," Pen said, laughing and thinking that his uncle was falling into the twaddling state.

"Gad, sir, that is not the question. A man of his estate may employ his time as he chooses. When you are a baronet, a county member, with ten thousand acres of the best land in Cheshire, and such a place as Trumpington (though he never goes there), you may do as you like."

"And so that was his brougham, sir, was it?" the nephew said, with almost a sneer.

"His brougham—O ay, yes!—and that brings me back to my point—revenons à nos moutons. Yes, begad! revenons à nos moutons. Well, that brougham is mine if I choose, between four and seven. Just as much mine as if I jobbed it from Tilbury's, begad, for thirty pound a-month. Sir Hugh is the best-natured fellow in the world; and if it hadn't been so fine an afternoon as it is, you and I would have been in that brougham at this very minute, on our way to Grosvenor Place. That is the benefit of knowing rich men;—I dine for nothing, sir;—I go into the country, and I'm mounted for nothing. Other fellows keep hounds and gamekeepers for me. *Sic vos non vobis*, as we used to say at Grey Friars, hey? I'm of the opinion of my old friend Leech, of the Forty-fourth; and a devilish

good shrewd fellow he was, as most Scotchmen are. Gad, sir, Leech used to say, 'He was so poor that he couldn't afford to know a poor man.'"

"You don't act up to your principles, uncle," Pen said good-naturedly.

"Up to my principles; how, sir?" the Major asked, rather testily.

"You would have cut me in St. James's Street, sir," Pen said, "were your practice not more benevolent than your theory; you who live with dukes and magnates of the land, and would take no notice of a poor devil like me." By which speech we may see that Mr. Pen was getting on in the world, and could flatter as well as laugh in his sleeve.

Major Pendennis was appeased instantly, and very much pleased. He tapped affectionately his nephew's arm on which he was leaning, and said,—"You, sir, you are my flesh and blood! Hang it, sir, I've been very proud of you and very fond of you, but for your confounded follies and extravagances—and wild oats, sir, which I hope you've sown. Yes, begad! I hope you've sown 'em; I hope you've sown 'em begad! My object, Arthur, is to make a man of you—to see you well placed in the world, as becomes one of your name and my own, sir. You have got yourself a little reputation by your literary talents, which I am very far from undervaluing, though in my time, begad, poetry and genius and that sort of thing were devilish disreputable. There was poor Byron, for instance, who ruined himself, and contracted the worst habits by living with poets and newspaper-writers, and people of that kind. But the times are changed now—there's a run upon literature—clever fellows get into the best houses in town, begad! *Tempora mutantur*, sir, and, by Jove, I suppose whatever is is right, as Shakspeare says."

Pen did not think fit to tell his uncle who was the author who had made use of that remarkable phrase, and here descending from the Green Park, the pair made their way into Grosvenor Place, and to the door of the mansion occupied there by Sir Francis and Lady Clavering.

The dining-room shutters of this handsome mansion were freshly gilded; the knockers shone gorgeous upon the newly-painted door; the balcony before the drawing-room bloomed with a portable garden of the most beautiful plants, and with flowers, white, and pink, and scarlet; the windows of the upper room (the sacred chamber and dressing-room of my lady, doubtless), and even a pretty little casement of the third story, which keen-sighted Mr. Pen presumed to belong to

the virgin bedroom of Miss Blanche Amory, were similarly adorned with floral ornaments, and the whole exterior face of the house presented the most brilliant aspect which fresh new paint, shining plate glass, newly cleaned bricks, and spotless mortar, could offer to the beholder.

"How Strong must have rejoiced in organising all this splendour," thought Pen. He recognised the Chevalier's genius in the magnificence before him.

"Lady Clavering is going out for her drive," the Major said. "We shall only have to leave our pasteboards, Arthur." He used the word "pasteboards," having heard it from some of the ingenious youth of the nobility about town, and as a modern phrase suited to Pen's tender years. Indeed, as the two gentlemen reached the door, a landau drove up, a magnificent yellow carriage, lined with brocade or satin of a faint cream colour, drawn by wonderful grey horses, with flaming ribbons, and harness blazing all over with crests: no less than three of these heraldic emblems surmounted the coats of arms on the panels, and these shields contained a prodigious number of quarterings, betokening the antiquity and splendour of the houses of Clavering and Snell. A coachman in a tight silver wig surmounted the magnificent hammercloth (whereon the same arms were worked in bullion), and controlled the prancing greys—a young man still, but of a solemn countenance, with a laced waistcoat and buckles in his shoes—little buckles, unlike those which John and Jeames, the footmen, wear, and which we know are large, and spread elegantly over the foot.

One of the leaves of the hall door was opened, and John—one of the largest of his race—was leaning against the door pillar, with his ambrosial hair powdered, his legs crossed; beautiful, silk-stockinged; in his hand his cane, gold-headed, *dolichoskion.* Jeames was invisible, but near at hand, waiting in the hall, with the gentleman who does not wear livery, and ready to fling down the roll of hair-cloth over which her ladyship was to step to her carriage. These things and men, the which to tell of demands time, are seen in the glance of a practised eye: and, in fact, the Major and Pen had scarcely crossed the street, when the second *battant* of the door flew open; the horse-hair carpet tumbled down the door-steps to those of the carriage; John was opening it on one side of the emblazoned door, and Jeames on the other, and two ladies, attired in the highest style of fashion, and accompanied by a third, who carried a Blenheim spaniel, yelping in a light blue ribbon, came forth to ascend the carriage.

Miss Amory was the first to enter, which she did with aerial lightness, and took the place which she liked best. Lady Clavering next followed, but her ladyship was more mature of age and heavy of foot, and one of those feet, attired in a green satin boot, with some part of a stocking, which was very fine, whatever the ancle might be which it encircled, might be seen swaying on the carriage-step, as her ladyship leaned for support on the arm of the unbending Jeames, by the enraptured observer of female beauty who happened to be passing at the time of this imposing ceremonial.

The Pendennises senior and junior beheld those charms as they came up to the door—the Major looking grave and courtly, and Pen somewhat abashed at the carriage and its owners; for he thought of sundry little passages at Clavering, which made his heart beat rather quick.

At that moment Lady Clavering, looking round, saw the pair—she was on the first carriage-step, and would have been in the vehicle in another second, but she gave a start backwards (which caused some of the powder to fly from the hair of ambrosial Jeames), and crying out, "Lor, if it isn't Arthur Pendennis and the old Major!" jumped back to terra firma directly, and holding out two fat hands, encased in tight orange-coloured gloves, the good-natured woman warmly greeted the Major and his nephew.

"Come in both of you.—Why haven't you been before?—Get out, Blanche, and come and see your old friends.—O, I'm *so* glad to see you. We've been watin and watin for you ever so long. Come in, luncheon ain't gone down," cried out this hospitable lady, squeezing Pen's hand in both hers (she had dropped the Major's after a brief wrench of recognition), and Blanche, casting up her eyes towards the chimneys, descended from the carriage presently, with a timid, blushing, appealing look, and gave a little hand to Major Pendennis.

The companion with the spaniel looked about irresolute, and doubting whether she should not take Fido his airing; but she too turned right about face and entered the house, after Lady Clavering, her daughter, and the two gentlemen. And the carriage, with the prancing greys, was left unoccupied, save by the coachman in the silver wig.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN WHICH THE SYLPH REAPPEARS.

BETTER folks than Morgan, the valet, were not so well instructed as that gentleman, regarding the amount of Lady Clavering's riches; and the legend in London, upon her Ladyship's arrival in the polite metropolis, was, that her fortune was enormous. Indigo factories, opium clippers, banks overflowing with rupees, diamonds and jewels of native princes, and vast sums of interest paid by them for loans contracted by themselves or their predecessors to Lady Clavering's father, were mentioned as sources of her wealth. Her account at her London banker's was positively known, and the sum embraced so many cyphers as to create as many O's of admiration in the wondering hearer. It was a known fact that an envoy from an Indian Prince, a Colonel Altamont, the Nawaub of Lucknow's prime favourite, an extraordinary man, who had, it was said, embraced Mahometanism, and undergone a thousand wild and perilous adventures, was at present in this country, trying to negotiate with

the Begum Clavering, the sale of the Nawaub's celebrated nose-ring diamond, "the light of the Dewan."

Under the title of the Begum, Lady Clavering's fame began to spread in London before she herself descended upon the Capital, and as it has been the boast of Delolme, and Blackstone, and all panegyrists of the British Constitution, that we admit into our aristocracy merit of every kind, and that the lowliest-born man, if he but deserve it, may wear the robes of a peer, and sit alongside of a Cavendish or a Stanley: so it ought to be the boast of our good society, that haughty though it be, naturally jealous of its privileges, and careful who shall be admitted into its circle, yet, if an individual be but rich enough, all barriers are instantly removed, and he or she is welcomed, as from his wealth he merits to be. This fact shows our British independence and honest feeling—our higher orders are not such mere haughty aristocrats as the ignorant represent them: on the contrary, if a man have money they will hold out their hands to him, eat his dinners, dance at his balls, marry his daughters, or give their own lovely girls to his sons, as affably as your commonest roturier would do.

As he had superintended the arrangements of the country mansion, our friend, the Chevalier Strong, gave the benefit of his taste and advice to the fashionable London upholsterers, who prepared the town house for the reception of the Clavering family. In the decoration of this elegant abode, honest Strong's soul rejoiced as much as if he had been himself its proprietor. He hung and re-hung the pictures, he studied the positions of sofas, he had interviews with wine merchants and purveyors who were to supply the new establishment; and at the same time the Baronet's factotum and confidential friend took the opportunity of furnishing his own chambers, and stocking his snug little cellar: his friends complimented him upon the neatness of the former; and the select guests who came in to share Strong's cutlet now found a bottle of excellent claret to accompany the meal. The Chevalier was now, as he said, "in clover:" he had a very comfortable set of rooms in Shepherd's Inn. He was waited on by a former Spanish Legionary and comrade of his whom he had left at a breach of a Spanish fort, and found at a crossing in Tottenham-court Road, and whom he had elevated to the rank of body-servant to himself and to the chum who, at present, shared his lodgings. This was no other than the favourite of the Nawaub of Lucknow, the valiant Colonel Altamont.

No man was less curious, or at any rate, more discreet, than Ned

Strong, and he did not care to enquire into the mysterious connection which, very soon after their first meeting at Baymouth, was established between Sir Francis Clavering and the envoy of the Nawaub. The latter knew some secret regarding the former, which put Clavering into his power, somehow; and Strong, who knew that his patron's early life had been rather irregular, and that his career with his regimen in India had not been brilliant, supposed that the Colonel, who swore he knew Clavering well at Calcutta, had some hold upon Sir Francis to which the latter was forced to yield. In truth, Strong had long understood Sir Francis Clavering's character, as that of a man utterly weak in purpose, in principle, and intellect, a moral and physical trifler and poltroon.

With poor Clavering his Excellency had had one or two interviews after their Baymouth meeting, the nature of which conversations the Baronet did not confide to Strong: although he sent letters to Altamont by that gentleman, who was his ambassador in all sorts of affairs. On one of these occasions the Nawaub's envoy must have been in an exceeding ill-humour; for he crushed Clavering's letter in his hand, and said with his own particular manner and emphasis:—

"A hundred be hanged. I'll have no more letters nor no more shilly-shally. Tell Clavering I'll have a thousand, or by Jove I'll split, and burst him all to atoms. Let him give me a thousand and I'll go abroad, and I give you my honour as a gentleman, I'll not ask him for no more for a year. Give him that message from me, Strong, my boy; and tell him if the money ain't here next Friday at 12 o'clock, as sure as my name's what it is, I'll have a paragraph in the newspaper on Saturday, and next week I'll blow up the whole concern."

Strong carried back these words to his principal, on whom their effect was such that actually on the day and hour appointed, the Chevalier made his appearance once more at Altamont's hotel at Baymouth, with the sum of money required. Altamont was a gentleman, he said, and behaved as such; he paid his bill at the Inn, and the Baymouth paper announced his departure on a foreign tour. Strong saw him embark at Dover. "It must be forgery at the very least," he thought, "that has put Clavering into this fellow's power, and the Colonel has got the bill."

Before the year was out, however, this happy country saw the Colonel once more upon its shores. A confounded run on the red had finished him, he said, at Baden Baden: no gentleman could stand against a colour coming up fourteen times. He had been

obliged to draw upon Sir Francis Clavering for means of returning home : and Clavering, though pressed for money (for he had election expenses, had set up his establishment in the country, and was engaged in furnishing his London house), yet found means to accept Colonel Altamont's bill, though evidently very much against his will ; for in Strong's hearing, Sir Francis wished to heaven, with many curses, that the Colonel could have been locked up in a debtor's gaol in Germany for life, so that he might never be troubled again.

These sums for the Colonel Sir Francis was obliged to raise without the knowledge of his wife ; for though perfectly liberal, nay, sumptuous in her expenditure, the good lady had inherited a tolerable aptitude for business along with the large fortune of her father, Snell, and gave to her husband only such a handsome allowance as she thought befitted a gentleman of his rank. Now and again she would give him a present or pay an outstanding gambling debt ; but she always exacted a pretty accurate account of the moneys so required ; and respecting the subsidies to the Colonel, Clavering fairly told Strong that he *couldn't* speak to his wife.

Part of Mr. Strong's business in life was to procure this money and other sums for his patron. And in the Chevalier's apartments, in Shepherd's Inn, many negotiations took place between gentlemen of the moneyed world and Sir Francis Clavering ; and many valuable bank-notes and pieces of stamped paper were passed between them. When a man has been in the habit of getting in debt from his early youth, and of exchanging his promises to pay at twelve months against present sums of money, it would seem as if no piece of good fortune ever permanently benefited him : a little while after the advent of prosperity, the money-lender is pretty certain to be in the house again, and the bills with the old signature in the market. Clavering found it more convenient to see these gentry at Strong's lodgings than at his own; and such was the Chevalier's friendship for the Baronet, that although he did not possess a shilling of his own, his name might be seen as the drawer of almost all the bills of exchange which Sir Francis Clavering accepted. Having drawn Clavering's bills, he got them discounted "in the City." When they became due he parleyed with the bill-holders, and gave them instalments of their debt, or got time in exchange for fresh acceptances. Regularly or irregularly, gentlemen must live somehow : and as we read how, the other day, at Comorn, the troops forming that garrison were gay and lively, acted plays, danced at balls, and consumed their rations ; though menaced with an assault from the enemy without the walls, and with a gallows if the

Austrians were successful,—so there are hundreds of gallant spirits in this town, walking about in good spirits, dining every day in tolerable gaiety and plenty, and going to sleep comfortably ; with a bailift always more or less near, and a rope of debt round their necks—the which trifling inconveniences, Ned Strong, the old soldier, bore very easily.

But we shall have another opportunity of making acquaintance with these and some other interesting inhabitants of Shepherd's Inn, and in the meanwhile are keeping Lady Clavering and her friends too long waiting on the door-steps of Grosvenor Place.

First they went into the gorgeous dining-room, fitted up, Lady Clavering couldn't for goodness gracious tell why, in the middle-aged style, "unless," said her good-natured ladyship, laughing, "because me and Clavering are middle-aged people;"—and here they were offered the copious remains of the luncheon of which Lady Clavering and Blanche had just partaken. When nobody was near, our little sylphide, who scarcely ate at dinner more than the six grains of rice of Amina, the friend of the Ghouls in the Arabian Nights, was most active with her knife and fork, and consumed a very substantial portion of mutton cutlets : in which piece of hypocrisy it is believed she resembled other young ladies of fashion. Pen and his uncle declined the refection, but they admired the dining-room with fitting compliments, and pronounced it "very chaste," that being the proper phrase. There were, indeed, high-backed Dutch chairs of the seventeenth century ; there was a sculptured carved buffet of the sixteenth ; there was a sideboard robbed out of the carved work of a church in the Low Countries, and a large brass cathedral lamp over the round oak table ; there were old family portraits from Wardour Street, and tapestry from France, bits of armour, double-handed swords and battle-axes made of *carton-pierre*, looking-glasses, statuettes of saints, and Dresden china—nothing, in a word, could be chaster. Behind the dining-room was the library, fitted with busts and books all of a size, and wonderful easy-chairs, and solemn bronzes in the severe classic style. Here it was that, guarded by double doors, Sir Francis smoked cigars and read "Bell's Life in London," and went to sleep after dinner, when he was not smoking over the billiard-table at his clubs, or punting at the gambling-houses in Saint James's.

But what could equal the chaste splendour of the drawing-rooms? —the carpets were so magnificently fluffy that your foot made no more noise on them than your shadow : on their white ground

bloomed roses and tulips as big as warming-pans : about the room were high chairs and low chairs, bandy-legged chairs, chairs so attenuated that it was a wonder any but a sylph could sit upon them, marqueterie-tables covered with marvellous gimcracks, china ornaments of all ages and countries, bronzes, gilt daggers, Books of Beauty, yataghans, Turkish papooshes and boxes of Parisian bon-bons. Wherever you sate down there were Dresden shepherds and shepherdesses convenient at your elbow ; there were, moreover, light blue poodles and ducks and cocks and hens in porcelain ; there were nymphs by Boucher, and shepherdesses by Greuze, very chaste indeed ; there were muslin curtains and brocade curtains, gilt cages with parroquets and love birds, two squealing cockatoos, each out-squealing and out-chattering the other ; a clock singing tunes on a console-table, and another booming the hours like Great Tom, on the mantel-piece —there was, in a word, everything that comfort could desire, and the most elegant taste devise. A London drawing-room, fitted up without regard to expense, is surely one of the noblest and most curious sights of the present day. The Romans of the Lower Empire, the dear Marchionesses and Countesses of Louis XV., could scarcely have had a finer taste than our modern folks exhibit ; and everybody who saw Lady Clavering's reception-rooms was forced to confess that they were most elegant ; and that the prettiest rooms in London— Lady Harley Quin's, Lady Hanway Wardour's, Mrs. Hodge-Podgson's own, the great Railroad Crœsus' wife, were not fitted up with a more consummate "chastity."

Poor Lady Clavering, meanwhile, knew little regarding these things, and had a sad want of respect for the splendours around her. "I only know they cost a precious deal of money, Major," she said to her guest, "and that I don't advise you to try one of them gossamer gilt chairs : *I* came down on one the night we gave our second dinner party. Why didn't you come and see us before ? We'd have asked you to it."

"You would have liked to see Mamma break a chair, wouldn't you, Mr. Pendennis ?" dear Blanche said with a sneer. She was angry because Pen was talking and laughing with Mamma, because Mamma had made a number of blunders in describing the house—for a hundred other good reasons.

"I should like to have been by to give Lady Clavering my arm if she had need of it," Pen answered, with a bow and a blush.

"*Quel preux Chevalier !*" cried the Sylphide, tossing up her little head.

"I have a fellow-feeling with those who fall, remember," Pen said. "I suffered myself very much from doing so once."

"And you went home to Laura to console you," said Miss Amory. Pen winced. He did not like the remembrance of the consolation which Laura had given to him, nor was he very well pleased to find that his rebuff in that quarter was known to the world: so as he had nothing to say in reply, he began to be immensely interested in the furniture round about him, and to praise Lady Clavering's taste with all his might.

"Me, don't praise me," said honest Lady Clavering, "it's all the upholsterer's doings and Captain Strong's; they did it all while we was at the Park—and—and—Lady Rockminster has been here and says the salongs are very well," said Lady Clavering, with an air and tone of great deference.

"My cousin Laura has been staying with her," Pen said.

"It's not the dowager: it is *the* Lady Rockminster."

"Indeed!" cried Major Pendennis, when he heard this great name of fashion. "If you have her ladyship's approval, Lady Clavering, you cannot be far wrong. No, no, you cannot be far wrong. Lady Rockminster, I should say, Arthur, is the very centre of the circle of fashion and taste. The rooms *are* beautiful indeed!" and the Major's voice hushed as he spoke of this great lady, and he looked round and surveyed the apartments awfully and respectfully, as if he had been at church.

"Yes, Lady Rockminster has took us up," said Lady Clavering.

"Taken us up, Mamma," cried Blanche, in a shrill voice.

"Well, taken us up, then," said my lady; "it's very kind of her, and I dare say we shall like it when we git used to it, only at first one don't fancy being took—well, taken up, at all. She is going to give our balls for us; and wants to invite all our diners. But I won't stand that. I will have my old friends and I won't let her send all the cards out, and sit mum at the head of my own table. You must come to me, Arthur and Major—come, let me see, on the 14th.—It ain't one of our grand dinners, Blanche," she said, looking round at her daughter, who bit her lips and frowned very savagely for a sylphide.

The Major, with a smile and a bow, said he would much rather come to a quiet meeting than to a grand dinner. He had had enough of those large entertainments, and preferred the simplicity of the home circle.

"I always think a dinner's the best the second day," said Lady

Clavering, thinking to mend her first speech. "On the 14th we'll be quite a snug little party;" at which second blunder, Miss Blanche clasped her hands in despair, and said "O Mamma, *vous êtes incorrigible.*" Major Pendennis vowed that he liked snug dinners of all things in the world, and confounded her ladyship's impudence for daring to ask such a man as *him* to a second day's dinner. But he was a man of an economical turn of mind, and bethinking himself that he could throw over these people if anything better should offer, he accepted with the blandest air. As for Pen, he was not a diner-out of thirty years' standing as yet, and the idea of a fine feast in a fine house was still perfectly welcome to him.

"What was that pretty little quarrel which engaged itself between your worship and Miss Amory?" the Major asked of Pen, as they walked away together. "I thought you used to be *au mieux* in that quarter."

"Used to be," answered Pen, with a dandified air, "is a vague phrase regarding a woman. Was and is are two very different terms, sir, as regards women's hearts especially."

"Egad, they change as we do," cried the elder. "When we took the Cape of Good Hope, I recollect there was a lady who talked of poisoning herself for your humble servant; and, begad, in three months, she ran away from her husband with somebody else. Don't get yourself entangled with that Miss Amory. She is forward, affected, and underbred; and her character is somewhat—never mind what. But don't think of her; ten thousand pound won't do for you. What, my good fellow, is ten thousand pound? I would scarcely pay that girl's milliner's bill with the interest of the money."

"You seem to be a connoisseur in millinery, Uncle," Pen said.

"I was, sir, I was," replied the senior; "and the old war-horse, you know, never hears the sound of a trumpet, but he begins to he, he!—you understand,"—and he gave a killing though somewhat superannuated leer and bow to a carriage that passed them and entered the Park.

"Lady Catherine Martingale's carriage," he said, "mons'ous fine girls the daughters, though, gad, I remember their mother a thousand times handsomer. No, Arthur, my dear fellow, with your person and expectations, you ought to make a good coup in marriage some day or other; and though I wouldn't have this repeated at Fairoaks, you rogue, ha! ha! a reputation for a little wickedness, and for being an *homme dangereux*, don't hurt a young fellow with the women. They like it, sir—they hate a milksop . . . young men must be young men,

you know. But for marriage," continued the veteran moralist, "that is a very different matter. Marry a woman with money. I've told you before it is as easy to get a rich wife as a poor one; and a doosed deal more comfortable to sit down to a well-cooked dinner, with your little entrées nicely served, than to have nothing but a damned cold leg of mutton between you and your wife. We shall have a good dinner on the 14th, when we dine with Sir Francis Clavering: stick to that, my boy, in your relations with the family. Cultivate 'em, but keep 'em for dining. No more of your youthful follies and nonsense about love in a cottage."

"It must be a cottage with a double coach-house, a cottage of gentility, sir," said Pen, quoting the hackneyed ballad of the Devil's Walk: but his uncle did not know that poem (though, perhaps, he might be leading Pen upon the very promenade in question), and went on with his philosophical remarks, very much pleased with the aptness of the pupil to whom he addressed them. Indeed Arthur Pendennis was a clever fellow, who took his colour very readily from his neighbour and found the adaptation only too easy.

Warrington, the grumbler, growled out that Pen was becoming such a puppy that soon there would be no bearing him. But the truth is, the young man's success and dashing manners pleased his elder companion. He liked to see Pen gay and spirited, and brimfull of health, and life, and hope; as a man who has long since left off being amused with clown and harlequin, still gets a pleasure in watching a child at a pantomime. Mr. Pen's former sulkiness disappeared with his better fortune: and he bloomed as the sun began to shine upon him.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN WHICH COLONEL ALTAMONT APPEARS AND DISAPPEARS.

N the day appointed, Major Pendennis, who had formed no better engagement, and Arthur, who desired none, arrived together to dine with Sir Francis Clavering. The only tenants of the drawing-room when Pen and his uncle reached it, were Sir Francis and his wife, and our friend Captain Strong, whom Arthur was very glad to see, though the Major looked very sulkily at Strong, being by no means well pleased to sit down to dinner with Clavering's d— house-steward, as he irreverently called Strong. But Mr. Welbore Welbore, Clavering's country neighbour and brother member of Parliament, speedily arriving, Pendennis the elder was somewhat appeased, for Welbore, though perfectly dull, and taking no more part in the conver-

sation at dinner than the footman behind his chair, was a respectable country gentleman of ancient family and seven thousand a year; and the Major felt always at ease in such society. To these were added other persons of note: the Dowager Lady Rockminster, who had her reasons for being well with the Clavering family, and the Lady Agnes Foker, with her son Mr. Harry, our old acquaintance. Mr. Pynsent could not come, his parliamentary duties keeping him at the House, duties which sate upon the two other senators very lightly. Miss Blanche Amory was the last of the company who made her appearance. She was dressed in a killing white silk dress, which displayed her pearly shoulders to the utmost advantage. Foker whispered to Pen, who regarded her with eyes of evident admiration, that he considered her "a stunner." She chose to be very gracious to Arthur upon this day, and held out her hand most cordially, and talked about dear Fairoaks, and asked for dear Laura and his mother, and said she was longing to go back to the country, and in fact was entirely simple, affectionate, and artless.

Harry Foker thought he had never seen anybody so amiable and delightful. Not accustomed much to the society of ladies, and ordinarily being dumb in their presence, he found that he could speak before Miss Amory, and became uncommonly lively and talkative, even before the dinner was announced and the party descended to the lower rooms. He would have longed to give his arm to the fair Blanche, and conduct her down the broad carpeted stair; but she fell to the lot of Pen upon this occasion, Mr. Foker being appointed to escort Mrs. Welbore Welbore, in consequence of his superior rank as an earl's grandson.

But though he was separated from the object of his desire during the passage downstairs, the delighted Foker found himself by Miss Amory's side at the dinner-table, and flattered himself that he had manœuvred very well in securing that happy place. It may be that the move was not his, but that it was made by another person. Blanche had thus the two young men, one on each side of her, and each tried to render himself gallant and agreeable.

Foker's mamma, from her place, surveying her darling boy, was surprised at his vivacity. Harry talked constantly to his fair neighbour about the topics of the day.

"Seen Taglioni in the Sylphide, Miss Amory? Bring me that souprame of Volile again, if you please (this was addressed to the attendant near him); very good: can't think where the souprames come from; what becomes of the legs of the fowls, I wonder? She's

clipping in the Sylphide, ain't she?" and he began very kindly to hum the pretty air which pervades that prettiest of all ballets, now faded into the past with that most beautiful and gracious of all dancers. Will the young folks ever see anything so charming, anything so classic, anything like Taglioni?

"Miss Amory is a sylph herself," said Mr. Pen.

"What a delightful tenor voice you have, Mr. Foker!" said the young lady. "I am sure you have been well taught. I sing a little myself. I should like to sing with you."

Pen remembered that words very similar had been addressed to himself by the young lady, and that she had liked to sing with him in former days. And sneering within himself, he wondered with how many other gentlemen she had sung duets since his time? But he did not think fit to put this awkward question aloud: and only said, with the very tenderest air which he could assume, "I should like to hear you sing again, Miss Blanche. I never heard a voice I liked so well as yours, I think."

"I thought you liked Laura's," said Miss Blanche.

"Laura's is a contralto: and that voice is very often out, you know," Pen said, bitterly. "I have heard a great deal of music, in London," he continued. "I'm tired of those professional people—they sing too loud—or I have grown too old or too blasé. One grows old very soon, in London, Miss Amory. And like all old fellows, I only care for the songs I heard in my youth."

"I like English music best. I don't care for foreign songs much. Get me some saddle of mutton," said Mr. Foker.

"I adore English ballads of all things," said Miss Amory.

"Sing me one of the old songs after dinner, will you?" said Pen, with an imploring voice.

"Shall I sing you an English song, after dinner?" asked the Sylphide, turning to Mr. Foker. "I will, if you will promise to come up soon:" and she gave him a perfect broadside of her eyes.

"*I'll* come up after dinner, fast enough," he said simply. "I don't care about much wine afterwards—I take my whack at dinner—I mean my share, you know; and when I have had as much as I want, I toddle up to tea. I'm a domestic character, Miss Amory—my habits are simple—and when I'm pleased I'm generally in a good humour, ain't I, Pen?—that jelly, if you please—not that one, the other with the cherries inside. How the doose *do* they get those cherries inside the jellies?" In this way the artless youth prattled on: and Miss Amory listened to him with inexhaustible good humour. When the

ladies took their departure for the upper regions, Blanche made the two young men promise faithfully to quit the table soon, and departed with kind glances to each. She dropped her gloves on Foker's side of the table, and her handkerchief on Pen's. Each had some little attention paid to him; her politeness to Mr. Foker was perhaps a little more encouraging than her kindness to Arthur: but the benevolent little creature did her best to make both the gentlemen happy. Foker caught her last glance as she rushed out of the door; that bright look passed over Mr. Strong's broad white waistcoat, and shot straight at Harry Foker's. The door closed on the charmer: he sate down with a sigh, and swallowed a bumper of claret.

As the dinner at which Pen and his uncle took their places was not one of our grand parties, it had been served at a considerably earlier hour than those ceremonial banquets of the London season, which custom has ordained shall scarcely take place before nine o'clock; and the company being small, and Miss Blanche, anxious to betake herself to her piano in the drawing-room, giving constant hints to her mother to retreat,—Lady Clavering made that signal very speedily, so that it was quite daylight yet when the ladies reached the upper apartments, from the flower-embroidered balconies of which they could command a view of the two Parks, of the poor couples and children still sauntering in the one, and of the equipages of ladies and the horses of dandies passing through the arch of the other. The sun, in a word, had not set behind the elms of Kensington Gardens, and was still gilding the statue erected by the ladies of England in honour of his Grace the Duke of Wellington, when Lady Clavering and her female friends left the gentlemen drinking wine.

The windows of the dining-room were opened to let in the fresh air, and afforded to the passers-by in the street a pleasant or, perhaps, tantalising view of six gentlemen in white waistcoats, with a quantity of decanters and a variety of fruits before them—little boys, as they passed and jumped up at the area railings, and took a peep, said to one another, "Mi hi, Jim, shouldn't you like to be there, and have a cut of that there pine-apple?"—the horses and carriages of the nobility and gentry passed by, conveying them to Belgravian toilets: the policeman, with clamping feet, patrolled up and down before the mansion: the shades of evening began to fall: the gasman came and lighted the lamps before Sir Francis's door: the butler entered the dining-room, and illuminated the antique gothic chandelier over the antique carved oak dining-table: so that from outside the house you

looked inwards upon a night scene of feasting and wax candles; and from within you beheld a vision of a calm summer evening, and the wall of Saint James's Park, and the sky above, in which a star or two was just beginning to twinkle.

Jeames, with folded legs, leaning against the door-pillar of his master's abode, looked forth musingly upon the latter tranquil sight: whilst a spectator, clinging to the railings, examined the former scene. Policeman X, passing, gave his attention to neither, but fixed it upon the individual holding by the railings, and gazing into Sir Francis Clavering's dining-room, where Strong was laughing and talking away, making the conversation for the party.

The man at the railings was very gorgeously attired with chains, jewellery, and waistcoats, which the illumination from the house lighted up to great advantage; his boots were shiny; he had brass buttons to his coat, and large white wristbands over his knuckles; and indeed looked so grand, that X imagined he beheld a member of parliament, or a person of consideration before him. Whatever his rank, however, the M.P., or person of consideration, was considerably excited by wine; for he lurched and reeled somewhat in his gait, and his hat was cocked over his wild and blood-shot eyes in a manner which no sober hat ever could assume. His copious black hair was evidently surreptitious, and his whiskers of the Tyrian purple.

As Strong's laughter, following after one of his own *gros mots*, came ringing out of window, this gentleman without laughed and sniggered in the queerest way likewise, and he slapped his thigh and winked at Jeames pensive in the portico, as much as to say, "Plush, my boy, isn't that a good story?"

Jeames's attention had been gradually drawn from the moon in the heavens to this sublunary scene; and he was puzzled and alarmed by the appearance of the man in shiny boots. "A holtercation," he remarked, afterwards, in the servants'-hall—"a holtercation with a feller in the streets is never no good; and indeed, he was not hired for any such purpose." So, having surveyed the man for some time, who went on laughing, reeling, nodding his head with tipsy knowingness, Jeames looked out of the portico, and softly called "Pleaceman," and beckoned to that officer.

X marched up resolute, with one Berlin glove stuck in his belt-side, and Jeames simply pointed with his index finger to the individual who was laughing against the railings. Not one single word more than "Pleaceman" did he say, but stood there in the calm summer evening, pointing calmly: a grand sight.

X advanced to the individual and said, "Now, sir, will you have the kindness to move hon?"

The individual, who was in perfect good humour, did not appear to hear one word which Policeman X uttered, but nodded and waggled his grinning head at Strong, until his hat almost fell from his head over the area railings.

"Now, sir, move on, do you hear?" cries X, in a much more peremptory tone, and he touched the stranger gently with one of the fingers inclosed in the gauntlets of the Berlin woof.

He of the many rings instantly started, or rather staggered back, into what is called an attitude of self-defence, and in that position began the operation which is entitled "squaring," at Policeman X, and showed himself brave and warlike, if unsteady. "Hullo! keep your hands off a gentleman," he said, with an oath which need not be repeated.

"Move on out of this," said X, "and don't be a blocking up the pavement, staring into gentlemen's dining-rooms."

"Not stare—ho, ho,—not stare—that *is* a good one," replied the other, with a satiric laugh and sneer,—"Who's to prevent me from staring, looking at my friends, if I like? not you, old highlows."

"Friends! I dessay. Move on," answered X.

"If you touch me, I'll pitch into you, I will," roared the other. "I tell you I know 'em all—That's Sir Francis Clavering, Baronet, M.P.—I know him, and he knows me—and that's Strong, and that's the young chap that made the row at the ball. I say, Strong, Strong!"

"It's that d—— Altamont," cried Sir Francis within, with a start and a guilty look; and Strong also, with a look of annoyance, got up from the table, and ran out to the intruder.

A gentleman in a white waistcoat, running out from a dining-room bare-headed, a policeman, and an individual decently attired, engaged in almost fistycuffs on the pavement, were enough to make a crowd, even in that quiet neighbourhood, at half-past eight o'clock in the evening, and a small mob began to assemble before Sir Francis Clavering's door. "For God's sake, come in," Strong said, seizing his acquaintance's arm. "Send for a cab, James, if you please," he added in an under voice to that domestic; and carrying the excited gentleman out of the street, the outer door was closed upon him, and the small crowd began to move away.

Mr. Strong had intended to convey the stranger into Sir Francis's private sitting-room, where the hats of the male guests were awaiting

them, and having there soothed his friend by bland conversation, to have carried him off as soon as the cab arrived—but the new comer was in a great state of wrath at the indignity which had been put upon him; and when Strong would have led him into the second door, said in a tipsy voice, "*That* ain't the door—that's the dining-room door—where the drink's going on—and I'll go and have some, by Jove; I'll go and have some." At this audacity the butler stood aghast in the hall, and placed himself before the door: but it opened behind him, and the master of the house made his appearance, with anxious looks.

"I *will* have some,—by —— I will," the intruder was roaring out, as Sir Francis came forward. "Hullo! Clavering, I say I'm come to have some wine with you; hay! old boy—hay, old corkscrew? Get us a bottle of the yellow seal, you old thief—the very best—a hundred rupees a dozen, and no mistake."

The host reflected a moment over his company. There is only Welbore, Pendennis, and those two lads, he thought—and with a forced laugh and piteous look, he said,—"Well, Altamont, come in. I am very glad to see you, I'm sure."

Colonel Altamont, for the intelligent reader has doubtless long ere this discovered in the stranger His Excellency the Ambassador of the Nawaub of Lucknow, reeled into the dining-room, with a triumphant look towards Jeames, the footman, which seemed to say, "There, sir, what do you think of that? *Now*, am I a gentleman or no?" and sank down into the first vacant chair. Sir Francis Clavering timidly stammered out the Colonel's name to his guest Mr. Welbore Welbore, and his Excellency began drinking wine forthwith and gazing round upon the company, now with the most wonderful frowns, and anon with the blandest smiles, and hiccupped remarks encomiastic of the drink which he was imbibing.

"Very singular man. Has resided long in a native court in India," Strong said, with great gravity, the Chevalier's presence of mind never deserting him—"in those Indian courts they get very singular habits."

"Very," said Major Pendennis, drily, and wondering what in goodness' name was the company into which he had got.

Mr. Foker was pleased with the new comer. "It's the man who would sing the Malay song at the Back-Kitchen," he whispered to Pen. "Try this pine, sir," he then said to Colonel Altamont, "it's uncommonly fine."

"*Pines—I've* seen 'em feed pigs on pines," said the Colonel.

"All the Nawaub of Lucknow's pigs are fed on pines," Strong whispered to Major Pendennis.

"Oh, of course," the Major answered. Sir Francis Clavering was, in the meanwhile, endeavouring to make an excuse to his brother guest, for the new comer's condition, and muttered something regarding Altamont, that he was an extraordinary character, very eccentric, very—had Indian habits—didn't understand the rules of English society; to which old Welbore, a shrewd old gentleman, who drank his wine with great regularity, said, "that seemed pretty clear."

Then, the Colonel seeing Pen's honest face, regarded it for a while with as much steadiness as became his condition; and said, "I know you, too, young fellow. I remember you. Baymouth ball, by Jingo. Wanted to fight the Frenchman. *I* remember you;" and he laughed, and he squared with his fists, and seemed hugely amused in the drunken depths of his mind, as these recollections passed, or, rather, reeled across it.

"Mr. Pendennis, you remember Colonel Altamont, at Baymouth?" Strong said: upon which Pen, bowing rather stiffly, said, "he had the pleasure of remembering that circumstance perfectly."

"*What's* his name?" cried the Colonel. Strong named Mr. Pendennis again.

"Pendennis!—Pendennis be hanged!" Altamont roared out to the surprise of every one, and thumping with his fist on the table.

"My name is also Pendennis, sir," said the Major, whose dignity was exceedingly mortified by the evening's events—that he, Major Pendennis, should have been asked to such a party, and that a drunken man should have been introduced to it. "My name is Pendennis, and I will be obliged to you not to curse it too loudly."

The tipsy man turned round to look at him, and as he looked, it appeared as if Colonel Altamont suddenly grew sober. He put his hand across his forehead, and in doing so, displaced somewhat the black wig which he wore; and his eyes stared fiercely at the Major, who, in his turn, like a resolute old warrior as he was, looked at his opponent very keenly and steadily. At the end of the mutual inspection, Altamont began to button up his brass-buttoned coat, and rising up from his chair suddenly, and to the company's astonishment, reeled towards the door, and issued from it, followed by Strong: all that the latter heard him utter was—"Captain Beak! Captain Beak, by jingo!"

There had not passed above a quarter of an hour from his strange appearance to his equally sudden departure. The two young men

and the Baronet's other guest wondered at the scene, and could find no explanation for it. Clavering seemed exceedingly pale and agitated, and turned with looks of almost terror towards Major Pendennis. The latter had been eyeing his host keenly for a minute or two. "Do you know him?" asked Sir Francis of the Major.

"I am sure I have seen the fellow," the Major replied, looking as if he, too, was puzzled. "Yes, I have it. He was a deserter from the Horse Artillery, who got into the Nawaub's service. I remember his face quite well."

"Oh!" said Clavering, with a sigh which indicated immense relief of mind, and the Major looked at him with a twinkle of his sharp old eyes. The cab which Strong had desired to be called, drove away with the Chevalier and Colonel Altamont; coffee was brought to the remaining gentlemen, and they went up stairs to the ladies in the drawing-room, Foker declaring confidentially to Pen that "this was the rummest go he ever saw," which decision Pen said, laughing, "showed great discrimination on Mr. Foker's part."

Then, according to her promise, Miss Amory made music for the young men. Foker was enraptured with her performance, and kindly joined in the airs which she sang, when he happened to be acquainted with them. Pen affected to talk aside with others of the party, but Blanche brought him quickly to the piano, by singing some of his own words, those which we have given in a previous number, indeed, and which the Sylphide had herself, she said, set to music. I don't know whether the air was hers, or how much of it was arranged for her by Signor Twankidillo, from whom she took lessons: but good or bad, original or otherwise, it delighted Mr. Pen, who remained by her side, and turned the leaves now for her most assiduously—"Gad! how I wish I could write verses like you, Pen," Foker sighed afterwards to his companion. "If I could do 'em, wouldn't I, that's all! But I never was a dab at writing, you see, and I'm sorry I was so idle when I was at school."

No mention was made before the ladies of the curious little scene which had been transacted below stairs; although Pen was just on the point of describing it to Miss Amory, when that young lady enquired for Captain Strong, who she wished should join her in a duet. But chancing to look up towards Sir Francis Clavering, Arthur saw a peculiar expression of alarm in the Baronet's ordinarily vacuous face, and discreetly held his tongue. It was rather a dull evening. Welbore went to sleep, as he always did at music and after dinner: nor did Major Pendennis entertain the ladies with copious anecdotes and

endless little scandalous stories, as his wont was, but sate silent for the most part, and appeared to be listening to the music, and watching the fair young performer.

The hour of departure having arrived, the Major rose, regretting that so delightful an evening should have passed away so quickly, and addressed a particularly fine compliment to Miss Amory, upon her splendid talents as a singer. "Your daughter, Lady Clavering," he said to that lady, "is a perfect nightingale—a perfect nightingale, begad! I have scarcely ever heard anything equal to her, and her pronunciation of every language—begad, of every language—seems to me to be perfect; and the best houses in London must open before a young lady who has such talents, and, allow an old fellow to say, Miss Amory, such a face."

Blanche was as much astonished by these compliments as Pen was, to whom his uncle, a little time since, had been speaking in very disparaging terms of the Sylph. The Major and the two young men walked home together, after Mr. Foker had placed his mother in her carriage, and procured a light for an enormous cigar.

The young gentleman's company or his tobacco did not appear to be agreeable to Major Pendennis, who eyed him askance several times, and with a look which plainly indicated that he wished Mr. Foker would take his leave; but Foker hung on resolutely to the uncle and nephew, even until they came to the former's door in Bury Street, where the Major wished the lads good night.

"And I say, Pen," he said in a confidential whisper, calling his nephew back, "mind you make a point of calling in Grosvenor Place to-morrow. They've been uncommonly civil; mons'ously civil and kind."

Pen promised and wondered, and the Major's door having been closed upon him by Morgan, Foker took Pen's arm, and walked with him for some time silently puffing his cigar. At last when they had reached Charing Cross on Arthur's way home to the Temple, Harry Foker relieved himself, and broke out with that eulogium upon poetry, and those regrets regarding a misspent youth, which have just been mentioned. And all the way along the Strand, and up to the door of Pen's very staircase, in Lamb Court, Temple, young Harry Foker did not cease to speak about singing and Blanche Amory.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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